Guns for the Afghanis—*Carl Bernstein*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 18, 1981 Price $1.25

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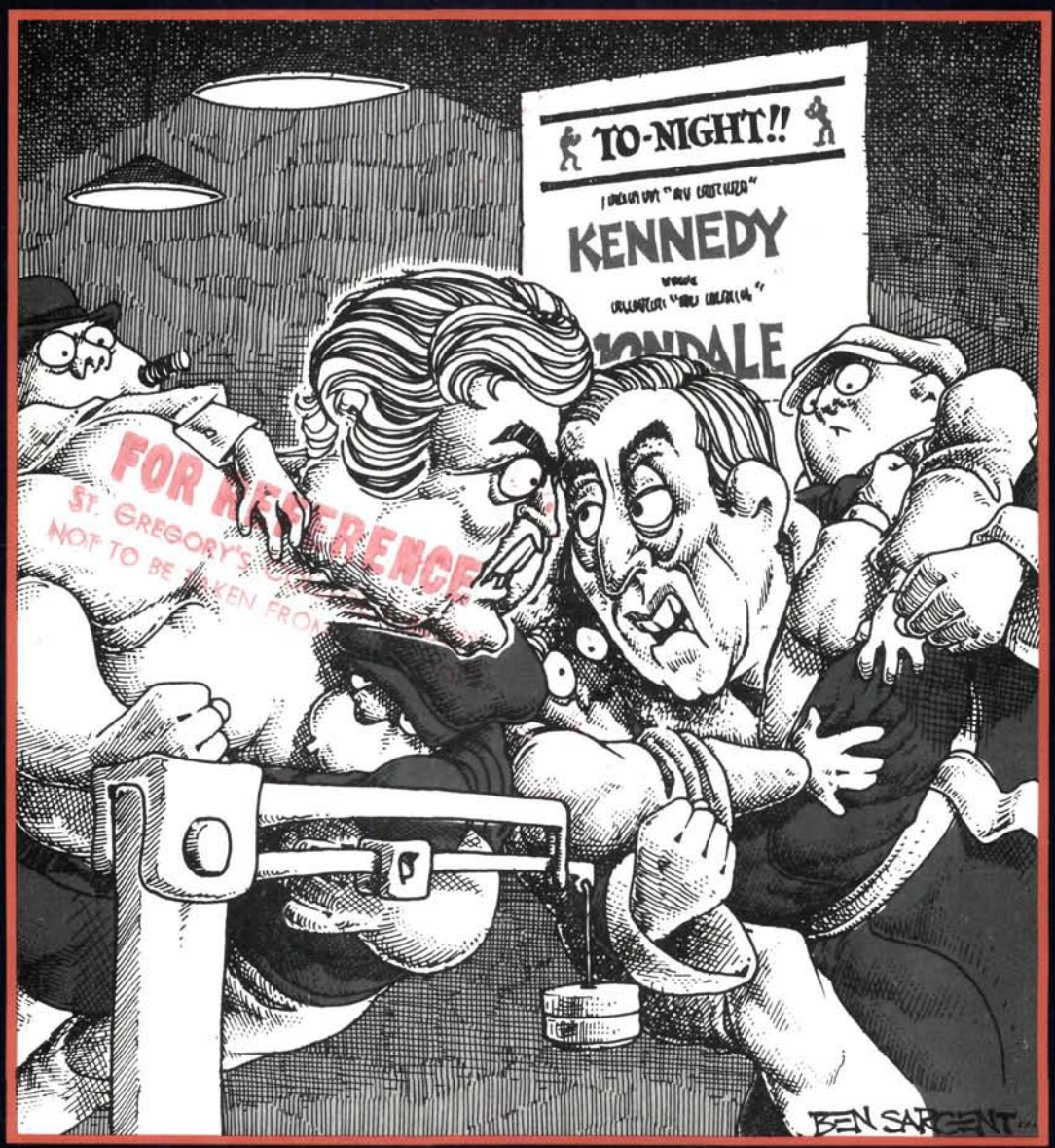

Morton Kondracke on the Democratic Candidates

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Battling the Paper Pile

In the fight on forms, last April 1 was no April Fool's Day. It was the effective date of a new law intended to turn back, or at least slow down, the mounting tide of government-required paperwork that's engulfing us all.

The Paperwork Reduction Act, it's called—a bipartisan piece of legislation shepherded through Congress by a coalition of Democrats and Republicans, signed into law by President Carter, and now being implemented by the Reagan Administration.

The paperwork burdens heaped on the public by the government are dizzying. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), enforcer of the new law, reports that federal agencies subject to the budget process thrust a paperwork load on the public totaling more than 1.2 billion work hours in fiscal 1980. The agencies had projected an increase in fiscal 1981. But OMB stepped in to cut the figure by 48 million hours.

Even so, the paperwork saddling the public this year adds up to 590,000 work years. That equals or surpasses the work years for the entire steel industry, or the entire newspaper and magazine industry.

Some 75% of the paperwork dictated by the government is mandatory. Penalties may be assessed on people who don't comply. Tax reporting is an example. Another 19% of the paperwork is required to get or keep a federal benefit, such as a Medicare payment or a research grant. Only 6% is voluntary.

The time and money spent filling out forms for the government are time and money that are unavailable for other, more productive purposes. For businesses, the dollars spent on government paperwork are funds that cannot be invested, say, in research and development. For hospitals, they're dollars shut off from use in health care services or medical research. For state and local governments, they're dollars unavailable for social services—or, for that matter, dollars that could be turned back to the people in reduced taxes.

There's a tendency in the bureaucratic burrows to view the piling up of paper as an end in itself. OMB is at war with that notion. It is establishing a federal information locator system. The aim is to get government agencies to knock off making demands on the public for information that already exists in Uncle Sam's vast apparatus.

Under terms of the new law, OMB is going to make government agencies come up with a " paperwork burden estimate " whenever they want information from the public. This will require an agency to detail the time and cost to the public of supplying the information, justify why it is needed, and tell how it will be used.

Come the first of next year, any government request for information must carry an OMB "control number." If there's no such number, you can ignore the request. Just toss it in the wastebasket.

UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

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TRB

from Washington
July 18, 1981

Royal Etiquette

America evidently needs a Royal Family. Lacking one, we will be dwelling on the wedding of the Prince of Wales and Lady Diana Spencer in London on July 29. When the British put on a big bash like this, America can't compete. The White House has trumpets announcing a state dinner, but what are they, after all, but a sublimation of the Iowa dinner horn calling the help in to lunch? "Hail to the Chief" for the president gets boring after a while; the inaugural parade is fun, of course, but nobody rides in a Cinderella coach; and where is the captain of the horse guards leading the queen's household cavalry wearing breastplate and cuirass and plumed helmet? America could use some of that. There's nothing like a touch of glamour to take your mind off unemployment statistics.

Lady Diana is 20 and the prince is 32 and the bride's father is an earl and reportedly this is the first time in 300 years that the heir to the throne has married a British subject. In former days there was a tendency to pick foreigners, to try to improve international relations.

I don't mean to belittle the Royal Wedding, but it can hardly compete with Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, which took place on June 22, 1897. The jubilee is described in James Morris's superb *Pax Britannica: The Climax of an Empire* (1968). In a fit of absent-mindedness the British had collected the largest empire in the history of the world, comprising nearly a quarter of the earth's land mass and a quarter of its population. You will be interested to know that on the morning the queen-empress sent out her imperial salutation, she wore a dress of "black moiré with panels of pigeon grey, embroidered all over with silver roses, shamrocks and thistles." In attendance for the celebration were an empress, a crown prince, 23 princesses, a grand duke, three grand duchesses, four ordinary duchesses, 40 Indian potentates (riding three abreast, gorgeously decorated), and the papal nuncio sharing a carriage with a representative of the emperor of China.

Every element of empire sent a detachment of troops in local uniforms to the jubilee: Cypriot Zaptiehs in fezzes; jangling Indian lancers; head-hunting Maoris and Dyaks, marching in step . . . gasps from the Cockney crowd at the big cavalrymen from New Zealand, and those gigantic Canadian hussars! They were all there. Fifty thousand troops tramped through London and the world wondered. The queen (God bless her) wore a bonnet with ostrich feathers beneath a white silk parasol. Her son, the Prince of Wales, rode horseback in a plumed hat and greeted her at St. Paul's with knightly courtesy.

Who could bother about material things or the inflationary spiral with a show like that going on? The British have a way of imparting a kind of majestic intimacy to occasions like this; in the romantic Royal Wedding one already senses the atmosphere of a gigantic family affair. Nancy Reagan will be there to represent the American cousins.

There is an intricate etiquette in royal matters and I have turned to one of my favorite books so as to follow it properly: *Buel's Manual of Self Help: A Book of Practical Counsel, Encouraging Advice and Invaluable Information*. It was published by the National Book Concern of Chicago in 1894 during Grover Cleveland's administration. It used to repose on the marble-topped table near the parlor organ, in South Lee, New Hampshire. The chapter on foreign courts is particularly strong. You can imagine with what interest it was consulted by Susie Lang (second oldest of eight), whose father ran the first farm on the left as you went up the hill from the Boston & Maine depot.

Let's plunge right into Buel and note that "the Queen of England undoubtedly holds the highest social position among all the world's potentates." That's a good starting place for a journalist boning up on the Royal Wedding. But the reporter soon finds that royal preeminence imposes heavy penalties; getting an American woman in and out of Victoria's reception, in fact, presents one of the most dramatic and tantalizing exercises I have encountered. You can imagine how Susie Lang palpitated, as she sat on the horsehair sofa holding *Buel's Manual* in her lap. I will let Buel tell the story: "Upon leaving her carriage she must carry nothing in her hands, for both will be needed to manage her train. As she enters the ante-room and meets there the lord-in-waiting, she drops her train, which has been carried thus far folded carefully over her left arm. At this juncture the lords-in-waiting adjust and spread her train by the use of their wands and then direct her to the presence chamber, taking her card at the same time and passing it on to the royal attendant, who reads it aloud." Susie squirms at this. Where did the visitor carry her card? In her teeth, probably, for both hands were occupied holding the yards of train; or maybe fending off those royal attendants with their wands. Let us go back to Buel: "The lady being thus announced goes forward until she approaches within a few feet of the royal person, usually to the edge of the dais, and then bows as low as possible. At this the Queen will present her hand to be kissed, but if it be a king, he merely returns the courtesy, whereupon the lady retires, with her face toward the sovereign until she has passed through the exit door."

Susie sighs. Backing out with a satin train—going against the current as it were—while keeping your eyes glued in the other direction would be harder than trying to guide the buggy and Old Zeno on the way to Newmarket. In fact, the *Manual* admits as much: "Great presence of mind and not a little dexterity, are necessary to prevent awkwardness, if not mishap, in thus moving backward, for the lady must not pick up her train, but must manage it as best she can with her feet."

Susie looks down at her bare toes, which she wriggles. Would she be able to get in and out of that awful reception with credit to her family and country and South Lee? She sets her jaw. Yes, she could! And she puts on Ma's apron and pins a couple of towels and pillow cases to it and goes out to the barn, fresh with newly mown hay, to practice backing up while looking ahead before the mild-eyed cows.

Which only goes to show the importance of fairy tales and Royal Weddings in successful government, and that nations live on dreams as well as dollars.

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CONTENTS

TRB from Washington	3	Royal Etiquette
Comment	5	Overselective Service
	7	Correspondence Justice O'Connor
Carl Bernstein	8	Arms for Afghanistan
Martin Peretz	10	The Beginning of Begin's Troubles
Edward Grossman	12	A Play of Jewish Passions
Shirley Christian	15	Freedom and Unfreedom in Nicaragua
Morton Kondracke	20	The Marathon Commences
		Books and the Arts
Stanley Kauffmann	26	Films: Muppets and Other Capers
Mark Crispin Miller	27	Off the Prigs
Leon Wieseltier	29	*Memoirs of an Anti-Semite* by Gregor von Rezzori
Anthony Bailey	30	*On the Blanket* by Tim Pat Coogan
James Atlas	32	*The Neighborhood of Baseball* by Barry Gifford
Paul Hollander	34	*At the Barricades* by Wilfred Burchett
Debora Greger	36	Poem: "Still Life"
Jack Beatty	37	*Everything We Had* by Al Santoli
	39	Brief Reviews
Marc Granetz		*Solomon's Daughter* by C. E. Poverman
Julia M. Klein		*Mourners Below* by James Purdy
Italy Diarist	43	Passages
Cover		*by Ben Sargent for* The New Republic. *Article on page 20.*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 18, 1981

Overselective Service

It's perfectly constitutional for Congress to register men and not women for the draft. So says the Supreme Court in *Rostker v. Goldberg*, one of those blockbuster social cases reserved—for some reason—for the end of the Court's October to July term. Six of the nine justices say legislators have every right to decide that soldiering is not women's work. This is bad policy and bad constitutional law.

It is bad constitutional law because the high court, disliking the implications of its own equal protection precedents, has made a sham of adhering to the "well-settled" (as lawyers say) sex discrimination test. That test says that if Congress wants to discriminate on the basis of sex, it must do two things. First it must point to a goal (in this case raising an army) and convince the Court that goal is important. Then it must show that the sex discrimination is "substantially" related to achieving the goal—in other words, that discriminating achieves the goal better than a sex-neutral plan would.

This two-part sex discrimination standard is known as the *Craig* test, after the pathbreaking case *Craig v. Boren*, which struck down a state law setting a higher drinking age for boys than for girls. The *Craig* test was supposed to be a compromise between the traditional poles of equal protection law. Most "discrimination" by Congress is presumed to be constitutional, since Congress can't help using categories (income levels, say, or age group or geographical location) to distribute costs and benefits. But some classifications, notably those based on race, have been considered "invidious" and presumed unconstitutional. The Supreme Court never could decide which category to put sex discrimination into—since some sex classifications are hard to argue with (maternity benefits for women but not men, for example) while others are plainly indefensible (requiring all nurses to be female, for example)—so it split the difference.

But in *Rostker* the Court makes only a sophisticated pretense of applying the *Craig* test to the all-male draft. Justice William H. Rehnquist, writing for the majority, rounds up the usual precedents. Then he more or less ignores them. He reasons as follows. Women are precluded by statute from combat duties. Yet combat troops are precisely what Congress says the military will need in any future draft. Thus there is no military need to register women, and any argument for including them must be based instead on equity. And, Rehnquist says, "Congress was certainly entitled . . . to focus on the question of military need rather than 'equity.'"

All of which leaves some questions unanswered. Why, for example, is the concept of equity so alien or distasteful to a majority of the high court that Rehnquist feels the need to place the word in quotation marks? Why must equity and military need be portrayed, without explanation, as somehow mutually exclusive? And above all, why, as Thurgood Marshall's dissent asks, can't Congress be required to find a way to meet the country's legitimate military needs in a fashion that *is* equitable?

Had the Supreme Court applied *Craig* in good faith, it would have have left to Congress the burden of proving that the *exclusion* of women from draft registration relates closely to the goal of raising an army. Rehnquist's majority opinion argues instead that the *inclusion* of women is pointless, since, the Court claims, a draft is for combat troops and women are banned from combat. This not only turns the proper question on its head, it is not even true. Congress, in attempt-

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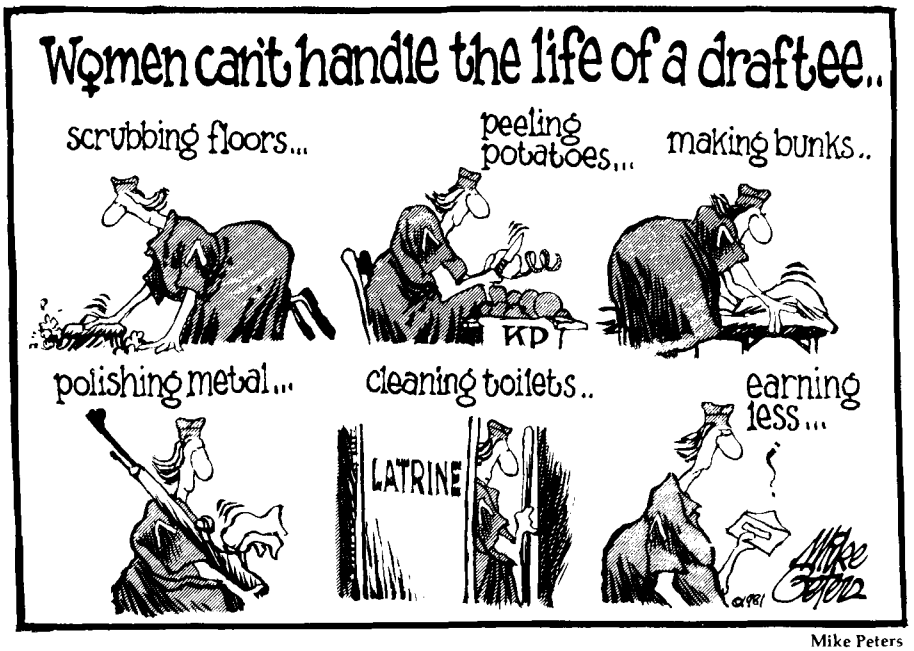
ing to justify all-male draft registration, does not pretend that every person inducted for some future draft will have to be eligible for combat. (If Congress did make that claim, it might also wish to explain why its registration scheme includes large numbers of men who are ineligible for combat because of physical handicap or conscientious objector status.) Uncontested testimony in the Senate, in fact, established that women could fill at least 80,000 positions in any likely draft—even under the present combat ban.

Why, then, is the Court so eager to "defer" to Congress's sexually discriminatory decision? It is true, as Rehnquist points out, that Congress has more constitutional latitude on military matters than perhaps in any other area. It also is true that the Republic will not crumble if men, rather than men and women, fill those 80,000 non-combat posts. But the Court would not stand by while Congress registered blacks and not whites (or vice versa) or Protestants and not Catholics. The burden is on Congress to explain what important interest is served by drawing a sexual distinction where none appears relevant. Congress did not meet that burden.

What may be lost in this legal thicket is why the rest of us should care about the Court's constitutional mugwumpery. There are two good reasons. First, the high court appears to be backing away fast from the *Craig v. Boren* line of cases, which is to say backing away from constitutional protections against sex discrimination. By just barely blundering through the motions of the *Craig* test, Rehnquist has sabotaged the precedent and made mush of the commonsensical notion that high-sounding motives ("national defense") are no excuse for discriminatory behavior unless somebody can suggest a clear relationship between them. If the Court is going to fudge the standard when the stakes are this high—life and death, perhaps, or at least many months of conscripted labor—it may well feel free to fudge the standard elsewhere. What about sex discrimination, say, in pension funds, or in child custody laws—both of which have been litigated extensively under the *Craig* test? And there is no doubt that Rehnquist, touted so often as one of the best legal minds on the Court, knows this. In fact, he has never subscribed to the Court's treatment of sex discrimination, having dissented not only in *Craig* but in virtually every sex bias case since. That five justices should choose to go along with him now is disturbing.

But if *Rostker v. Goldberg* is bad constitutional law, it is worse policy. Even conceding combat restrictions, there is no acceptable reason to exclude women from a share of the nation's defense. To do so is to discriminate against both men and women. A male-only draft disfavors men, obviously, because they must bear the entire burden of staffing the armed forces—and the cost in time, to say nothing of the risk to life and limb, is unparalled by any other obligation of the citizen. It disfavors women, perhaps, even more—for the cost is the continued social imprimatur on a set of values that say women are too frail and too emotional to be entrusted with any direct role in the serious business of protecting national security.

Still, we don't have to talk about equity (or even "equity") to make the case for unisex draft registration. The plain fact is that women have made and continue to make a much greater contribution to the armed services than most chest-thumpers imagine. Military statistics show that female volunteers—who now number some 150,000—are easier to recruit, more mature, better educated, more quickly promoted, more inclined to re-enlist, and less inclined to have drug or disciplinary problems than their male counterparts. Even the Senate Armed Services Committee, no great fan of female draft registration, concedes that women have made an "important contribution" to the armed forces. Education and ability to learn sophisticated skills have come close to replacing simple physical prowess as the prime attribute of the soldier in many parts of the modern military, and women are demonstrably as good as or better than men by this standard.



Mike Peters

Of course, it was politics, not policy, that doomed female draft registration in Congress. (All four military service chiefs, after all, recommended registering women.) And another sort of politics probably helped doom it before the Supreme Court. There is little doubt that the Court would have ruled differently had the Constitution included the Equal Rights Amendment, which is yet another reason why we're sorry to acknowledge to all the Phyllis Schlaflys that there will be no ERA this time around.

(continued on page 8)

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Correspondence

Remember Osirak

To the editors:
Thank for your excellent editorial, "No Option" (June 20). When I first read about Israel's raid on an Iraqi nuclear power plant, I felt excited and relieved. But trying to defend that reaction to others was nearly impossible. Your explanation of the circumstances surrounding Israel's attack so clearly defined the situation that I am urging everyone I know to read it. I congratulate you for defending an incident that few dare to support. I only hope that others can be persuaded.

Nancy Feinstein
Washington, DC

To the editors:
The Arabs are old warriors. They appreciate excellence and perfection on the battlefield. I, for one, think that the "Israeli" raid on Iraq's nuclear plant was a super military success, and I congratulate them for it. Those who insist that the raid was an act of aggression must be dreaming. The Arab countries have been in a state of war with "Israel" since 1948, and Iraq is an Arab country. In a state of war the question of morality becomes irrelevant.

Let the "Israelis" celebrate—but not for long. For by attacking that reactor, "Israel" showed to the Arabs and to the world the one thing that will bring about its ultimate end. "Israel" is in the wrong place. Palestine belongs to the Arabs; history says so, and the millions of Palestinian refugees say so. If only nuclear weapons will get "Israel's" attention, so be it!

Nabil Haddad
Wheaton, Maryland

To the editors:
When the day comes that terrorists seize a nuclear reactor site to extort some political concession, it will be worthwhile to recall that it was the sovereign state of Israel that acted to strip reactors of the immunity from violence enjoyed prior to June 7, 1981, putting these awesome installations on the agenda of "anything goes." The source of such terrorists most likely will be the Middle East; the reactor they will seize most likely will be in the United States, where reactor site security is poor, to say the very least; their demands will be for some drastic change in US policy toward the Middle East; their battle cry will be "Remember Osirak!" This event will make the scenarios written around the Three Mile Island incident seem benign in the extreme. Menachem Begin & Co. have opened a new Pandora's box; we do not yet know its full contents.

Richard K. Smith
Washington, DC

Palatable polling

To the editors:
In "The Art of Polling" (*TNR*, June 20), Michael Kinsley voices a nasty but true misuse of market research: you *can* get what you pay for in a survey—whether the questions are loaded or the final data are subjectively skewed for interpretation. However, objective studies of people's attitudes are still a necessary part of gathering the information with which to make intelligent decisions. So please don't lump the outright misuses (and just plain bad pieces of research, if the description is accurate) like the Cambridge-Union Carbide study with those that deal with matters that most of us can handle without interrupting our dinners or losing our appetites for knowledge.

Dale Doggett
Hollywood, California

Third world socialism

To the editors:
I am intrigued by this dazzling paragraph in Michael Harrington's article on the Socialist International ("Eurosocialism Takes Off," *TNR*, May 30): "For a variety of historic reasons, the 'socialisms' of the third world are authoritarian at best, totalitarian at worst. The line between relating to such movements and endorsing them is hard to draw. The SI's turn toward the third world is politically and morally problematic. In my opinion, it is no less necessary for that."

Harrington is among those who criticize the US for "propping up" undemocratic governments that are friendly to us or serve our strategic interests. Far from "relating to" or "endorsing" such governments, he believes we should condemn them and cut off military and/or economic aid. The argument that such aid may be "necessary" —that it might serve US interests—he would dismiss with contempt; nothing problematic here. Where the interests of "Eurosocialism" are involved, however, we need not be so fastidious in our political and moral judgments. The SI's interests are of a higher order.

Presumably Eurosocialism is an inherently progressive force and may therefore be permitted greater latitude. A similar determinism underlies the Communists' double standard on human rights, the chief difference being that they see themselves as history's progressive agent.

Perhaps I read too much into Harrington's words. He may simply have been won over to the "quiet diplomacy" school of human-rights thought. In which case, doesn't he owe Ernest Lefever an apology?

Tom Kahn
Washington, DC

Michael Harrington replies:
In the third world there are individuals, movements, and governments sincerely committed to freedom, justice, and socialism that cannot realize these ideals, or only very imperfectly, because of conditions created by the 400-year domination of the capitalist world market. They, therefore, are often forced into contradictions as they seek to act on the basis of values which the West praises even as it subverts their possibility. Western socialists can ignore the responsibility of their societies for this situation, blame the victims, and, in the name of an arrogant, imperial morality, declare their ideas as too good for the vast majority of mankind. They can, on grounds of national security, then give active military and economic support to unambiguously reactionary forces and their unambivalent repression of freedom.

This crackpot reaction is not only immoral but self-defeating (Vietnam, Iran). It is also Kahn's politics, a perspective which a perceptive West German observer recently located on the right wing of the Christian Democrats in his country. Or one can, like the Eurosocialists, recognize the international economic sources of the contradictions within third world movements

(continued on page 40)

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This is not destined to be the time for new social initiatives—either in Congress or in the state legislatures—and, with the high court "deferring" left and right to the other branches of government, the nation will get what it voted for.

To a certain point, we agree with the court's inclination to deference. We too would rather see 535 representatives than nine appointed jurists make a historic change in the way the country raises its armies. In many cases the Court would be overstepping its mandate to strike down misguided legislation. But a male-only registration scheme is not simply misguided. It flouts established and persuasive constitutional doctrine. The constitutional question was for the Court to decide, and it decided wrong.

Justice O'Connor

President Reagan's selection of Sandra O'Connor to replace Potter Stewart is an admirable exception to the general pattern of his administration. Not in the sense that it is a bit more liberal, but in the sense that it is actually true to his alleged conservative principles. On tax and budget matters, Reagan's fine talk about lean government, market freedom, productivity, and so on is misapplied to policies that serve none of these values, but serve well the interests of favored groups. Reagan might easily have done the same thing with his first Supreme Court appointment, throwing a juicy T-bone to ravenous right-to-lifers and Moral Majoritarians. Instead, he seems to have found a highly qualified jurist dedicated to the conservative value he said would guide his court appointments: judicial restraint.

And Reagan has not let his friends on the extreme right veto his selection because her record is not absolutely pure (pure against, that is) on abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment. These people don't really believe in judicial restraint. They would be happy, for example, to see the Supreme Court outlaw abortion. For that reason, and considering whom else Reagan might have appointed (and might still appoint), principled judicial restraint is something to be grateful for.

Before O'Connor was named, there were absurd suggestions that Reagan's promise to pick a woman would detract from the search for the best-qualified candidate, as if such a paragon existed or could be found. If anything, Reagan's decision to keep that promise produced a better candidate than we otherwise would have gotten. It excluded some of the more tempting ideologues, and put a special premium on sterling credentials. O'Connor was third in the Stanford Law School class in which Justice William Rehnquist was first. The man who was second may feel overlooked, but the rest of us can feel reassured.

The resistance fighters think they get no help from the US. They're wrong.

Arms for Afghanistan

A year and a half after Soviet troops marched into Afghanistan, the US Central Intelligence Agency is coordinating a complex, far-flung program, involving five countries and more than $100 million, to provide the Afghan resistance with the weaponry of modern guerrilla warfare. The result is an emerging anti-Soviet alliance—the United States, China, Pakistan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia—that, in the judgment of American planners, is effectively countering the most blatant Soviet aggression of the postwar era.

Shortly after the December 1980 invasion there were scattered newspaper reports that the United States intended to supply arms to the Afghan resistance fighters. Not much more has been heard on the subject since. In fact, the American role in Afghanistan —as described by senior officials of the Carter and Reagan administrations—is far more extensive than any of those initial reports suggested. For the United States the stakes are especially high. This is the first time that weapons supplied with American help have been used to kill regular troops of the Soviet army—though thousands of American soldiers were killed by Soviet-supplied weapons in Korea and Vietnam.

For the Afghan people, the Soviet invasion and its aftermath have been devastating. In a country of 16 million people, tens of thousands have been killed and wounded. Soviet helicopter gunships have emptied most villages, forcing more than two million men, women, and children to flee into neighboring Pakistan, where they make up the largest refugee population in the world today.

In discussing the clandestine operation to supply arms to the resistance, officials of the Reagan and Carter administrations tell a remarkably consistent story—balancing their desire to report on its success with their desire to keep operational details secret. These officials—from the White House, the State Department, the CIA, and the Pentagon—are convinced that the Soviets are bogged down in Afghanistan, a view supported by British and Arab intelligence estimates. The Russians have lost their grip on the roads linking Afghanistan's principal cities. They have suffered an estimated 6,000 casualties, with 2,000 killed. Several thousand more Russian troops are ill with hepatitis. Resistance forces are now initiating the fighting, combining the tactics of guerrilla warfare with increasingly sophisticated weaponry. According to a secret White House report, at least 60 Russian helicopters have been shot down—many by surface-to-air missiles. The Soviets have failed to develop either a political or a military strategy to deal effectively with the Afghan resistance.

Officials cite two overriding reasons for the Soviets'

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difficulties: the extraordinary will of the *mujahiddin* rebels, who are fighting a holy war for their homeland (see "Russia's Afghan Enemy," by John Bierman, *TNR*, June 6); and the effectiveness of the covert operation to supply them with weapons.

PLANNING for the operation was personally ordered by President Carter and carried out under the direct supervision of his national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and his CIA director, Stansfield Turner. In the hours after the Soviets crossed the Afghan border, the president told a meeting of the National Security Council that the United States had "a moral obligation" to help arm the resistance. Until then US aid to rebels fighting the Kabul government had been limited to medical supplies and communications equipment. Increased American assistance, the president told his aides, should do nothing to disturb the impression that the Afghan struggle was an Islamic struggle. Coordination with the Islamic countries has been conducted by the CIA through its counterpart intelligence services, rather than through normal diplomatic channels.

America's NATO allies were neither consulted nor asked to participate. There was grave doubt in the White House that the nations of Western Europe would lend support to an operation involving such direct confrontation with the Russians. Moreover, one of Mr. Carter's advisers explained, "it was a foregone conclusion that it would leak if the Europeans were involved."

On January 9, 1980, 12 days after Soviet troops had rolled across the border, the CIA outlined plans for the operation to the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee. "The CIA recognized that if we were going to let the Afghans defend themselves we had to get them weapons that were effective against the gunships," former senator Birch Bayh, then the committee's chairman, said in a recent interview with ABC News. Above all, that meant heat-seeking missiles—SAM-7s, which, like almost all the weapons destined for Afghanistan, have been Russian-made or, often, replicas, making them untraceable to their real suppliers. RPG antitank rockets, anti-aircraft guns, Kalashnikov (AK-47) assault rifles, and machine guns were also designated for priority shipment to Afghanistan. "The objective was to strike a balance," explained Bayh. "On the one hand we wanted the Soviets to pay a significant price. On the other hand we didn't want to raise the conflict to the level of conventional warfare . . . or provide so much assistance that the Soviets would pour more troops in." Not a single objection to the CIA's proposal was raised on the Oversight Committee—in contrast to the atmosphere that, in 1975, led the full Senate to terminate the last CIA arms supply operation, to rebel forces in Angola.

While the Senate committee was being briefed, Defense Secretary Harold Brown was in Peking for a long-scheduled visit. The secret part of his agenda dealt primarily with Afghanistan. "It was something of a minuet," said one participant in the discussions. "We let it be known we were going to do certain things. They let it be known they were going to do certain things. There was an implicit agreement. Instead of a joint operation, we would do things in parallel." The Chinese agreed to permit overflights of their territory for planes carrying arms bound eventually for Afghanistan. The Chinese also would help supply the SAM-7s and RPG antitank rockets. And if the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan were closed, the Chinese would take over the transshipment of weapons—permitting planes to unload in China and providing Chinese personnel to carry the cargo across the difficult Chinese-Afghan frontier.

THE ROLES of the other nations involved in the covert operation have remained constant since the operation began. The United States has provided financial assistance, $20 million to $30 million to start, considerably more since; has arranged the purchase of some weapons on the international arms market; and is the operation's primary planner and coordinator. Saudi Arabia has undertaken the other major financing role, equal to or greater than that of the United States. The Saudis, who also bankroll much of Pakistan's military budget, have kept a firm hand on the Pakistanis, pushing them—at United States urging—to keep their border open for the transfer of arms to Afghanistan. The Egyptians have provided training for the Afghan guerrilla fighters and serve as the major source of arms—supplying weapons obtained from the Soviet Union during the years of Egyptian-Soviet friendship, and tons of replicated Soviet armaments, turned out in factories on the outskirts of Cairo.

Pakistan, the country most essential to the operation's success, allows the weapons to be moved across its 1,400-mile border with Afghanistan. But the Pakistanis, fearful of Soviet retaliation, have been reluctant to aid the insurgency openly. Even today, Pakistani diplomats, who were deliberately excluded from a role in the operation's planning, continue to insist that Pakistan is not officially cooperating in any venture to

Staff Additions

We are pleased to announce that Nicholas von Hoffman and John Keegan have become contributing editors to *TNR*. Nicholas von Hoffman is a syndicated columnist. His most recent book is *Make-Believe Presidents* (Pantheon). John Keegan teaches at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, and is the author of *The Face of Battle* (Viking).

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arm the resistance. But all the major features of the operation, according to American officials, have been personally approved by Pakistani president Mohammed Zia. And to reduce the risk of Soviet retaliation, the Pakistanis imposed three conditions of their own: first, the countries supplying weapons to Afghanistan would not publicly acknowledge their role; second, arms arriving in Pakistan would have to move immediately across the border, without any storage or warehousing; and third, the quantity of weapons moving through Pakistan would be limited to the equivalent of about two planeloads a week. The weapons arrive as air cargo in Pakistan, in planes whose markings are constantly changed. There, under the supervision of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, the arms are transferred to the *mujahiddin*, who carry them across the border on the backs of men and mules, then up into the mountain passes where the weapons are distributed to bands of tribesmen in their camps.

The flow of arms began as a trickle in the first months after the invasion. In October 1980, the Carter administration and the Islamic states committed themselves to a significant increase in the level of aid, particularly heavy equipment for antitank and antiaircraft warfare. The effects of those shipments began to be felt this spring. The Reagan administration has since reviewed the clandestine operation and ordered it expanded. Pakistan, impressed with the administration's pledge of three billion dollars in long-term military credits, has eased some of its restrictions on the quantity of arms crossing the border.

The *mujahiddin* say they still need more arms, and that is doubtless true. They complain that they are still not getting help from the United States. Untrue. The resistance fighters seldom know where their equipment comes from. Some of it has been acquired as a result of the very high rate of defection in the Afghan army (some estimates say as many as three-quarters of the country's 80,000 troops have defected). But arms passed out in the guerrilla camps are often said to have come from defectors when, in fact, they have moved through the pipeline established by the clandestine operation.

Senior officials of the Reagan administration, assessing the success of the operation, believe the Russians are being bled by their Afghanistan adventure—militarily and politically. "Our judgment is that they will have to maintain a huge occupation force for years to come under the present circumstances," states one of Secretary Haig's principal deputies. Here lies the single biggest difference between the Reagan and Carter administrations in their approach to Afghanistan. The Carter people left office thinking the combination of Islamic will and covert aid might put enough pressure on the Soviets to force them eventually to negotiate their way out. The Reagan team is less interested in the prospect of negotiations and appears to relish the notion of seeing the Soviets tied down for years to come—expending blood and equipment and prestige along the Maginot line of the Khyber Pass.

Carl Bernstein

Carl Bernstein, co-author of *All the President's Men* and *The Final Days*, is a producer and principal correspondent for special reporting projects at ABC News. This article expands on his report on Afghanistan, broadcast on the June 18 edition of the ABC newsmagazine program, "20/20."

Whoever won, lost.

The Beginning of Begin's Troubles

by Martin Peretz

Jerusalem

The only certainty in the aftermath of the least conclusive of Israeli elections is that whatever coalition gets pasted together to form a government won't govern well or long. There is even the possibility that neither Menachem Begin, who'll have the first shot, nor Shimon Peres will be able, through the usual barter of principles and policies, to muster a Knesset (parliamentary) majority at all—in which case the parties will reassemble their slates and the country will again be going to the polls. Elections are meant to clarify. Almost a fortnight after the vote was completed, and with the final tallies in, this one is still a cliffhanger.

The Israeli voter had 31 parliamentary lists to choose from on June 30, including one ticket made up entirely of and for retired persons and another of people barely old enough to fight; one whose name

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pledged it to "saving the homeland" and another committed to "revocation of the income tax"; one made up of Russian immigrants and another of American immigrants with the notorious Rabbi Kahane—late of the Jewish Defense League—at its head; one coming out of the bus drivers' cooperative and another from among young toughs in Jerusalem neighborhoods; and still another organized solely to retain parliamentary immunity for a shady character who otherwise faces extradition and a term in the French slammer. None of these parties—and more than a dozen others—got very far, and their stray votes have now been proportionally redistributed to the lists that did receive the minimum 19,000 votes needed to qualify a party for at least one seat in Israel's tenth elected Knesset. The two major parliamentary blocs, Likud with 48 seats and Labor with 47, have amassed between them more votes than ever before, hinting at the emergence of a real two-party system, American-style. Begin's efforts showed signs of the ministrations of David Garth, Peres's of those of David Sawyer—both high-priced US campaign consultants. There was more image and less genuine argument in this campaign than in any other, old-timers lament. Among the minority parties that expired were some that could trace a continuous history going back to the earliest days of Zionist politics. But with Peres and Begin in a near dead heat, the remaining minority parties hold all the cards.

The Knesset representation of the largest of these, the National Religious party, was halved on election day from 12 seats to six, but this stunning weakness at the polls doesn't at all diminish its strength in the parliamentary maneuvering now under way. Its willingness to join a government is the prize both Labor and the Likud need but only one of them will get.

IT IS MENACHEM BEGIN who will be asked first by President Navon to form a government and it is his Likud that can, with the least restiveness in the ranks, best pay the current price—a heavy one in terms of further theocratic encroachments on a predominantly secular population. Even though the NRP is habituated to holding sway over the educational and social welfare establishments and is virtually addicted to the patronage that comes with participation in a ruling coalition, it is of two minds about being the partner that puts Begin over the top. The coming months will not be pleasant ones in Israel, and the NRP is eager that the responsibility for what occurs be widely shared. It is also fearful that a narrowly based government will have to call for new elections too soon for it to have recovered from its poor electoral showing. That's why the NRP leader, Dr. Yosef Burg, interior minister in the outgoing coalition, has proposed a national unity government that would comprise, aside from his own party as indispensable matchmaker, the Likud and Labor at a minimum, and possibly also two or three tiny Knesset factions to lend some celebrity and spice to the dreary offerings of the big parties. Nothing like this is going to happen; Jews don't compose their differences for cosmetic purposes. Some jaundiced observers say that Burg meant the suggestion cynically anyway: a deception to extract some more concessions from Begin, whose messianism makes him view any partnership with others not precisely of his persuasion as a deflection from his own destiny, but who, on the other hand, will do anything to stay in power.

Menachem Begin may be prime minister again, but, as an old Yiddish proverb has it, power won't be a picnic. Begin—for all his portentous displays of piety not a pious man himself—is now inclined perforce to generous reciprocal trade with the politicized rabbis of the NRP. Being over-reachers, though, they will make his life miserable by relentlessly upping the ante. At some point the freethinking bourgeois centrists in the Likud will bolt: there is just so much official piety they can tolerate. Many of these folk are also considerably less hawkish than the Likud mainstream; and if Begin gives them as defense minister General Ariel Sharon,

Case Dismissed

A judge in New York has dismissed a $2.5 million libel suit against *The New Republic*. The suit grew out of an article, "The Hidden Rosenberg Case," by Sol Stern and Ronald Radosh (*TNR*, June 23, 1979), which concluded, on the basis of new evidence uncovered by the authors, that Julius Rosenberg had in fact participated in a Soviet spy ring but that Ethel Rosenberg had been framed by the FBI. Both Rosenbergs were executed in 1953.

Bonnie Brower, a lawyer active in the campaign to exonerate both Rosenbergs, was mentioned briefly in the article as having passed on some information to the authors. She sued, claiming that her professional reputation had been damaged. She also wrote to *TNR* asserting that the suggestion that she had told the authors anything at all "is an outrageous, bald-faced lie, concocted by them out of whole cloth." *TNR* published this statement, along with the authors' reply that Brower "either has a very short memory or is deliberately lying. . . ." She sued for this also. A summary of the controversy sympathetic to Brower was published in the magazine *Seven Days*. Ronald Radosh wrote a personal letter of complaint to one of the editors of *Seven Days*, David Dellinger. This letter came into Brower's hands and she sued for that too.

The judge dismissed all three complaints, saying that the first statement was not damaging and the other two were proper exercises of the right of reply. *TNR*'s legal bill for getting this frivolous lawsuit dismissed was $18,000. The bill for defending the authors has not yet arrived.

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A Play of Jewish Passions

Jerusalem

For some years now, Israelis have been warning one another that they can't afford the luxury of civil war. These warnings sometimes have been accompanied by references, implicit or explicit, to the civil war in Jerusalem that preceded the fall of the city to the Romans. Until lately, the warnings and the implied analogies seemed far-fetched. Today they seem less so. It has become conceivable that the Israelis, like the Jews of 19 centuries ago, will shed one another's blood.

Such a possibility is indirectly suggested by a new play which opened in Jerusalem at about the same time as the election campaign. "The Wars of the Jews," by the Israeli playwright Joshua Sobol, connects ancient fratricide and disaster with current events so dramatically that it might as well be doing it explicitly. Like the language in which it is cast, however, the drama and the timeliness of the play are readily understood only by insiders. Perhaps for this reason, few tourists are to be seen at performances.

The Hebrew spoken, chanted, and shouted in "The Wars of the Jews" is strictly archaic. It is suitable, and difficult. The sources for the words, and for the action, are the Bible, the Talmud, the Apocrypha, and especially the book by the first-century Jewish turncoat Josephus after which the play is named.

The production has been mounted very aptly in the ramparts and ruins of the Old City. The audience seats itself on the rocks as best it can, and the actors are picked out suddenly with torches as they crouch in holes or stand on the battlements, their robes flapping in the wind. It's cold outdoors at night in Jerusalem, even in summer, and this discomfort adds to the effect of fresh destruction, mourning, and anger. For those unfamiliar with classical Hebrew and with the Israeli scene, the power of the play might seem to derive just from this setting. Its popularity and the feelings it stirs up might seem puzzling. The ax that Sobol grinds throughout might go unnoticed.

The robed figures represent the ghosts of the Jews killed or starved in the rebellion against the Romans and during the civil war. They remember and mourn the greatness of Jerusalem, that wonder of the world with its prophets and crazy men and pilgrims and inhabitants "from all nations." Why has it been destroyed? They promise to show the audience how the Jews themselves brought destruction on the city—as Josephus wrote, "for our misfortunes we have only ourselves to blame."

And indeed, for those who can follow the Hebrew and have read Josephus, it's remarkable how closely the argument of "The Wars of the Jews" follows the account that this nobleman and general published in Rome after he switched sides. Sobol's villains, like Josephus's, are the Zealots. It is they whom we are shown in the course of the play murdering Jews who waver, it is they who are said to have forced the Romans to besiege the city and burn the Temple. On the other hand, the hero of the piece is Rabbi Yohanan Ben Zakkai, who, as Jewish tradition tells it, smuggled himself out of Jerusalem in a coffin, surrendered to the Romans, and got their permission to set up an academy where the Jews substituted the study of sacred texts for territory, statehood, and Zion.

Any Israeli who has stayed awake in school knows the outlines of the story and is acquainted with its controversy:

mercurial hero of the 1973 reverse Suez crossing and now unyielding architect of the Judea and Samaria colonization, party discipline among these secular recalcitrants will be a problem even before it is tested on theological issues.

The political arithmetic makes Begin dependent also on another religious bloc, the ultra-orthodox Agudat Israel, with four seats in parliament. None of the Americans reporting from Israel has adequately grasped the potential trouble this party poses for Begin. Most reporters lazily assume that because the Agudah is "ultra-orthodox," it is dogmatic not only on religion but also, by extension, on the occupied territories as well. In fact, they care much more about autopsies and pork and public Sabbath observance than about Nablus and Gaza and Jenin. To be sure, the religious parties are ordinarily willing to overlook diplomatic and economic policies about which they have reservations if their religious demands are met; and the religious demands of the Agudah, like those of the NRP, are often egregious. Both of them are most antediluvian when they want the Knesset to give a restrictive answer to the question, "Who is a Jew?" But the Agudah, which has a more or less socialistic wing based on orthodox kibbutzim, is a non-Zionist, in some sense an anti-Zionist, party. Its concerns are otherworldly. This is a cohort, then, of very cautious, even dovish, men. For them the equation between territory and holiness, made by the Likud and by the competing (and backsliding) religious party, is blasphemy. Few of their sons and none of their daughters join the army. What a partner for Menachem Begin! Agudah representatives in the Knesset, moreover, are not free agents. On any major issue they go for instructions to the geriatric Council of Torah Sages, some of whose luminaries believe the cardinal blasphemy of our time to be the establishment of the state of Israel itself. It's their fellow travelers whom you see pictured in the papers burning the Israeli flag in Brooklyn.

The third component in Begin's formula for another term is a three-man faction, Tami, led by Aharon Abuheitzera, Begin's former minister of religion. He was recently acquitted of bribery only to find that he'll soon stand before another court on extortion charges. (Like John Connally in the US, he is the only Israeli politician declared certifiably innocent of anything.) This party is also more dovish than the Likud, its second man having been agriculture minister in the last Labor government. Tami is wholly rooted among voters of Levantine or Oriental descent (Sephardim)

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who served the Jewish cause better after Jerusalem fell—the remnant of the Zealots who escaped to Masada to fight on, or the peaceful students of Ben Zakkai? This old debate has revived thanks to the excavation of Masada and the glorification, by some, of the suicide pact. Yet although most members of the audience at "The War of the Jews" undoubtedly know of this dispute, and probably don't buy the glorification of Masada, it isn't the relative merits of armed as against nonviolent resistance that Sobol leads them to weigh. He questions the necessity of rebellion against a tolerant Rome in the first place.

Sobol, like most of his audience, is liberal in outlook. His ideal Jerusalem, as the ghosts remember it, is a pluralistic, perhaps even a somewhat hedonistic city. Not for nothing are the villains, the Zealots, given speeches fulminating against foreign influence, against non-Jewish sacrifices at the Temple, against Jews who deal with non-Jews, against the very presence of non-Jews in the land. Here, in these illiberal speeches—which Sobol didn't invent but only lifted from historical and legendary sources—the play, for Israelis, becomes contemporary. The same kinds of speeches were heard from people and candidates of the religious-nationalistic right during the elections.

"The War of the Jews" uses history to deliver a message about the present and a warning about the future. Its success with the theater-going segment of the Israelis and with liberal critics shouldn't be attributed solely to the play's energy and skillfulness. It also stems from the fact that Sobol's mood is the mood of many of those in Israel who don't wish to see the state become more theocratic and who still hope for an accommodation with Arabs closer to home than the Egyptians. Liberals are demoralized. They fear what the future holds. The portents, the signs that Israeli democracy may not be able to handle the strains that are coming, render Sobol's historical analogies believable, in spite of the fact that there is no famine, and that Israel—far from being a weak province—is the superpower of the Middle East.

The election campaign was symptomatic. Vituperation has always been one of the styles of Israeli discourse, but no one remembers a candidate being mobbed and called a traitor, as Shimon Peres was. The alarming violence at his rallies may have regained for Labor just enough votes to make the outcome so close that Begin now must rely on small religious and ultranationalist parties to stay on top. These latter-day Zealots, liberals are afraid, will exploit their advantage to transform and "save" the country against the will of the majority. In the worst event, democratic processes will break down. If they do, civil war isn't impossible.

Although this analysis contains an element of self-pity, it's true that the taboo against Jews attacking other Jews physically has weakened considerably in Israel. This has happened at the same time that the so-called "national consensus" became problematical—what, after all, have the Jews returned to Israel for? What kind of Jewish state should the Jewish state be? What are to be its boundaries, cultural and geographical? Is it to live in isolation always? These questions were only obscured for a generation by the national consensus on survival, and postponed by political arrangement. If they can't be postponed further, or answered democratically, it may go hard for Israel, and for its friends.

Edward Grossman

Edward Grossman is an American writer living in Jerusalem.

who feel themselves iced out of the system. Its weakness in acquiring votes, despite heavy financing from wealthy Sephardim in the Diaspora, suggests, by the way, the limits of the politics of resentment in Israel.

To give himself some more maneuvering margin, Begin will probably count at least implicitly on the passive support of a right-wing splinter, the Tehiya or Renaissance party. This faction, which includes old comrades from the pre-state underground, or, as the nostalgists call it, "the fighting family," will back him against the doves, but will defect as soon as Begin fulfills the last commitment of his one distinctive achievement, the final withdrawal from the Sinai as part of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. The Tehiya might be willing to back relinquishing the Sinai in exchange for annexation of the West Bank. But on that score there's no need to worry: no one annexes anything with a one- or two-vote parliamentary majority.

If for any reason Begin fails to win a Knesset majority for his cabinet, it is still theoretically possible for Labor to form a government. Labor has increased its representation in the next Knesset by fully 50 percent. If Peres could somehow satisfy the Torah Sages on a few points of their agenda (a very long-range one, after all), then the Agudah might prefer Labor to what they view as Begin's reckless secular zealotry. The Agudah functioned quite happily in previous Labor governments. But Peres would also have to get the backing of two center and center-left minority parties whose central tenets are opposition to "religious coercion." One of these, the Civil Rights party, has feminist roots.

Even with this anomalous partnership, and unless the NRP were to switch gears, Labor would still be a few votes short. Tami, of course, is for sale to any buyer; and Moshe Dayan might well rather give his own party's two seats to Peres, an old comrade from the Ben Gurion days, than to Begin, whom he disdains. But Dayan is desperate for a comeback, so it's anybody's guess where he'll go. Labor in power would also have to assume that the four Communists (two of them Arabs) would stick to Peres in a pinch, out of greater hostility to Begin. But the Rakah Communists do not exactly make politically convenient partners for an effort by Peres and Labor to push through concessions on the occupied territories.

Whoever forms a government, then, forms it on unstable foundations. A Peres government at least would be able to lift Israeli morale by demonstrating

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that the country is not permanently isolated in the international community. Labor's more flexible diplomatic position alone would achieve that—and would do so without much risk: there aren't many signs that the Arabs will be responsive to the kind of reasonable compromises that Labor contemplates and that Israel's friends such as the US and the new French government of François Mitterrand might expect.

The prospects under Begin are all grim: ever sharper clashes with the US and the slow transformation of Israel's current isolation into a political and, worse, psychological quarantine. Within weeks Israelis will be paying for the preelection goodies the Begin government distributed in the form of consumer subsidies and slashed import taxes on luxury goods. Two days after the elections, top civil servants in the treasury met to map a strategy "to prevent the collapse of the State budget." The strategy will hurt. One sober Israeli economist estimates that the rate of inflation might jump to nearly 300 percent, about twice what it is now, putting Israel within striking range of quadruple-digit inflation. Less than a year from now, when Begin effects the evacuation of the prosperous Sinai settlements in the north and the militarily critical port and airport in the south, a shudder will go through all of Israeli society. If Sadat, having retrieved the Sinai for Egypt, then reverts to a rather more hostile stance toward Israel, as many political observers suggest he inevitably will, the shudder will become a trauma. Peres ought not to envy Begin. He will succeed him soon enough.

ONE REASON this is likely to be so is the striking new political maturity of Arab voters. In recent years—and particularly in the ambience created by the propaganda victories of the PLO in world capitals—it has been assumed that the Arabs living within the pre-1967 borders would be lost even to Israel's more conciliatory parties. Instead, more than half of these Arabs voted on June 30 for Labor. They may have been primarily motivated by fear of Begin; but their behavior was also a decisive rejection of the rejectionists, who would have had them vote with the pro-PLO Communists. Rakah attracted only about 25 percent of the Arab vote; the remaining quarter was distributed among the other parties, rightist ones included.

The big question about the future is the emerging politics of the Sephardi voters. Hailing largely from the Arab countries, these Israelis see the notion of moderate Arabs as an oxymoron. Their collective memory of living under and with the Arabs is vivid and unhappy. Hence their hawkishness. They have also been disadvantaged outsiders in Israel—despite genuine and ambitious efforts by previous Labor governments to close the social gap. This could not be achieved in the single generation of Israel's history; the birthrate of the Sephardim is too high, their educational level too low, and their immigration too steady and recent for that. Begin spoke for them. Even in power, he has successfully cast himself as the despised outsider, although his slate was short on Sephardim and his government shorter still on achievements in their behalf. The leftist critics of Israel, who used to fix on Sephardi voicelessness in the political system as evidence of Zionist injustice, now find equally compelling evidence of the same Zionist perfidy in the existence of a Sephardi chorus on the belligerent right.

THE FACTS are more complicated. Even in the harshest of economic environments, the gap is gradually being bridged, certainly with greater speed than is the case between blacks and whites in the US. Near universal military service and a healthy rate of inter-ethnic marriage hasten the process. But liberal values and the habits of democracy are second nature to no one, least of all to folk raised in Moslem autocracies. For days I went to election rallies all over the country. Many of them were rowdy, even nasty, but the reports of violence were vastly exaggerated. In any case, a few handfuls of thugs do not characterize Sephardi behavior. As it is, about 25 percent of the Sephardi vote was cast for Labor—even though Labor had been stigmatized as the party of the "beautiful people," a socialist party of the rich. Another 15 to 20 percent of the Sephardim voted for the confessional parties or for the several strictly ethnic slates.

The rest went to Begin, as tribute, surveys tell us, to a man without illusions about the Arabs, defiant in a hostile world, a sharply drawn hero in a nearly faceless political landscape. When Begin goes, though, the Likud will splinter into at least two distinct groups, one of free-enterprise self-enrichers and the other of ideologists dreaming of maps of Greater Israel first conjured up in Europe but never realized—and not realizable—on the ground. With these factions the Sephardim have exactly zero in common. Another Jewish proverb says it well: where there is mortality, there is hope. Their interests are not on the whole those of big capital, and they don't ever want to live again among the Arabs, not in Iraq, and not on the West Bank either. The Sephardi vote, in some real sense, may not exist. Like the women's vote in the US it is too large to see as a distinct bloc. It includes, after all, *commerçants* from Iraq and street-sweepers from the Yemen.

The recent election sharpened ideological positions, deepened ethnic cleavages, embittered personal differences. Right now Israel seems more fractious than ever. But its democratic system still seems vibrant. As Fritz Mondale told a Hebrew University audience in Jerusalem the day after the election, "If any state could be forgiven a lapse in democratic routine because of the constant threat to its existence, it is this state. Yet Israel is a sound, faithful, flourishing democracy. The free Israeli press—oh, how free!" The audience began to laugh, and Mondale continued wryly, "The open debate—oh, how open!" In how many countries could such a joke be shared?

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Will *personalismo* be enough to counter *Marxismo*?

Freedom and Unfreedom in Nicaragua

by Shirley Christian

Managua

Not too long ago, hundreds of women in frayed dresses and aprons, many of them toting children, stormed the glass doors of the government headquarters here. At first, those inside the small, modern building locked the doors and tried to ignore the shouting, placard-waving crowd. After a few hours, a delegation was admitted, and Daniel Ortega, a former Sandinista guerrilla who is now the "coordinator" of the governing junta, came downstairs to talk to the women. The conversation was not pleasant. The women, sellers of beans, rice, and other basic foods in the city's delapidated Eastern Market, claimed that for political reasons they had been denied stalls in recently opened new markets and that the government now was trying to drive them out of business at the old market by cutting off the bus routes. They complained of being called *somocistas* and thieves by government bureaucrats and of being pressured to join the Sandinistas' neighborhood committees. Finally, they said, word had reached them that Ortega had referred to them as "scum." None of this was pleasing to women who said they had been among the earliest supporters of the Sandinista cause. The meeting ended when Ortega stormed off after a dispute about whether a photographer from the opposition newspaper *La Prensa* should be allowed to take pictures. "If you like *La Prensa*, then take your problems to *La Prensa* to resolve," he said.

But Ortega, a 35-year-old high school dropout who still dresses in the olive fatigues of his guerrilla days and wears a handgun on his hip, ended up facing the women twice more, on television. In a tone alternately pleading and frustrated, he denied the government had used politics in assigning new market stalls and said the problem was that the women had been afraid to try the new sites. Finally he committed the government to keeping the Eastern Market open and to improving the facilities there. As for the "scum" charge, he first denied using the term, then changed his mind and said maybe he had. In case he had, he was now taking it back. That was his privilege, he said.

This episode may not appear important in the greater scheme of things, but it says a great deal about how things function in Nicaragua two years after the Sandinista National Liberation Front, backed by a popular insurrection, ended the 45-year reign of the Somoza family and its National Guard. It demonstrates that the Sandinistas are capable of making arbitrary, authoritarian decisions, then backing off from them. It demonstrates that the Sandinistas would like to control all of the press, but don't. It demonstrates that they wish everybody would line up behind their revolution, but don't force the issue. It demonstrates that the Sandinistas are willing to face the people and practice give-and-take on practical matters. Most of all, it demonstrates that Nicaraguans do not fear the Sandinistas, that people are willing to talk and fight back.

Nicaragua today is a country where East German troop carriers are a common sight, where an Aeroflot cargo plane lands every morning, carrying such items as AK-47 rifles for the growing Sandinista army, and where 5,000 or more Cubans are at work. It is a place where elections are an almost forbidden topic, where the vast majority of the top leadership is Marxist, and where the measure of patriotism is the degree of tongue-lashing an official can mete out to a visiting US congressional delegation. It is also a country with many of the functional trappings of liberty: a press that operates in a free and aggressive manner, opposition political parties that generally speak their minds, and a church-going population that has been trekking in droves to a village where the Virgin Mary was reported sighted. And it is a country where those who want out can get out, but where it is a test of faith among the opposition to stay.

The government's foreign policy is "nonaligned," with the kind of alignments that term has come to signify: it disapproves of the Pinochet regime in Chile, but abstained in the UN vote condemning the Soviet Union for invading Afghanistan. It has developed excellent relations with the likes of Kampuchea and Libya, which recently provided a $100 million loan to Nicaragua, while verging on war with one of its neighbors, Honduras, and giving at least some sustenance to insurrection movements in Guatemala and El Salvador.

It adds up to a situation that provides justification to those who argue that Nicaragua is inevitably bound for totalitarianism and to those who argue that political and economic pluralism is alive and well.

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Both of these concepts are abstractions, however, and Nicaragua is not a place of abstractions. It is a place where what matters are human dealings, where people carry their individual ideas into face-to-face encounters, as did Daniel Ortega and the market women, and where what emerges is either accommodation or blows. In a region where *personalismo* is always a key factor in determining outcomes, Nicaragua is perhaps the country where personal dealings and personal ties matter the most. It has fewer than two and a half million people in a territory the size of Iowa. It is often said that one reason the Nicaraguan revolution has been occurring in a largely civilized manner is that every family has its own Sandinista commander, as it also has its own *somocista*, perhaps exiled now in Miami, or living quietly in Nicaragua.

Thus, Nicaraguans are threading their way through the maze caused by the juxtaposition of conflicting ideological abstractions as if it were business as usual, while the outside world ponders the great issues of where they are headed. Even the formal structure of the government is a maze. At the top are nine Sandinista *commandantes*, most of them in their early and mid-30s, who comprise the Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front. Acting together, they constitute the executive power, but the Nine also have individual constituencies or ministerial empires that they largely control on their own. It has long been expected that the Front will evolve into a political party, and the opposition already calls it that, but the Sandinistas have taken no known steps so far in that direction, except for issuing membership cards to about 150 of the highest-ranking Sandinistas.

BELOW the Sandinista Directorate is the junta, recently reduced from five men to three. Its role is that of a sort of general manager, running the country on a day-to-day basis under guidelines laid down by the Sandinista Directorate. But in the crossover style typical of the Nicaraguan government today, Daniel Ortega, the junta member who dealt with the angry market women, is also one of the Nine and therefore the dominant member of the junta. A second junta member, writer and intellectual Sergio Ramírez, is a member of the Sandinista Front, though a civilian, and functions as Ortega's counselor. The third junta member, Rafael Córdova Rivas, is a member of the opposition Democratic Conservative party and provides one of the few remaining signs of formal pluralism in the government.

The reduction in the size of the junta was brought about by the resignation in late February of Arturo J. Cruz, another member of the Democratic Conservative party. Cruz, a former official of the Inter-American Development Bank who is highly regarded by the Sandinistas, had become the focal point in the struggle between the Marxists and the bourgeoisie, the one man with considerable government influence whose door was always open to those with complaints. His resignation was brought about by a combination of family pressures and a conviction on his part that it was better for the Sandinistas and the opposition to confront each other head to head instead of having him deflect things. Not wanting to lose his prestige and counsel, however, the Sandinistas made him ambassador to Washington. The fifth junta member, Moises Hassan, a civilian Sandinista, was removed for reasons of balance and named minister of construction.

CRUZ and Cordova Rivas actually constituted the second generation of non-Marxists on the junta. They were selected after negotiations between opposition leaders and Sandinistas that followed the resignations in April 1980 of Alfonso Robelo and Violeta Chamorro. Robelo, a millionaire businessman and political leader who had helped mount business opposition to Somoza, quit the junta because he felt the Sandinistas were breaking their promise to establish a democratic process. Mrs. Chamorro, the widow of assassinated newspaper publisher Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, reportedly was having health problems, but she had sided with Robelo on the issues that led to his resignation.

Theoretically below the junta are the government ministers, but since the most important ministries are held by various members of the Nine, it is difficult to determine who responds to whom. Other ministers include three Roman Catholic priests and various civilians, among them the son of a former US Marine from the occupying force of 50 years ago. Those from the Sandinista Directorate who are cabinet ministers are Tomás Borge, the Sandinista elder at 51, who is minister of interior, a post that includes state security; Humberto Ortega, Daniel's brother, who is minister of defense and army commander; Jaime Wheelock, the minister of agriculture and agrarian reform; and Henry Ruiz, minister of planning.

In addition to the Directorate, the junta, and the ministers, Nicaragua has a Council of State with quasi-legislative functions. Established by decree, it has been expanded twice and now has 52 members representing various elements in Nicaraguan society, ranging from the Sandinista Front and its mass organizations to the clergy, organized labor, private enterprise, and the political parties. However, when the council opened its second session on May 4, a dozen non-Marxist delegates stayed away to underscore their demand for an election timetable and guarantees of formal democracy. In theory the Council of State can initiate legislation, but in practice most of what it takes up seems to come from the junta or, unofficially, from the Directorate through the president of the state council, Carlos Núñez, another of the Nine.

On paper this system of Directorate, junta, ministries, and Council of State looks like a formula for tight control. Nine men, who to the casual observer look and act alike, constitute the executive power, then in their individual capacities control the organisms that

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are responsible to the general management, and even control the legislative body by a form of gerrymandering in assigning seats. Sometimes it all works that way; usually it doesn't. The thing to remember is that power emanates not from one man but from nine. As the *commandantes* distance themselves more and more from the bush life that once united them, they develop individual ways of working. Although remarkably adept at presenting a united face when necessary, the Sandinista Front comes from three guerrilla tendencies, which were the product of early dissension within the insurrection movement. These differences were bandaged over, not healed, to form the Front. The tendencies, however, represented different ways of fighting Somoza more than different ways of governing. So while the signs of the tendencies remain today, there are also signs of a reordering of the division into two camps that have to do with style of governing. One we might call the pragmatists, the other the ideologues.

In this division, the pragmatist camp, supposedly people who recognize the non-Marxist nature of the Nicaraguans and are willing to accommodate themselves to it, is made up of the Ortega brothers and Jaime Wheelock. In the US context, these are the moderates, or the potential ones. Those who seem to put ideology first are Tomás Borge and his protégé, Bayardo Arce. Whether this breakdown results from genuine feelings or from the division of labor within the regime is an unanswered question.

BORGE and Wheelock seem to represent the extremes among the Nine. While Wheelock looks for ways to keep private farmers and professionals in place and producing, Borge says if they don't like the way things are going they can leave any time. The only surviving founder of the Sandinista movement, Borge is the standup comic of the revolution, a man who tosses out rapid-fire one-liners about his friendships with Fidel Castro, the Libyans, and the PLO, and his disdain for Yankee imperialism. An example: "The North Americans say that if we'll behave ourselves they will loan us money again. But we intend to continue behaving badly." Wheelock, a self-critical intellectual who charms nearly everyone he meets, doesn't utter such things. He received his university education in Chile and lived in Western Europe before founding one of the branches of the guerrilla movement, the Proletarian tendency. He organized this splinter group after being thrown out of the Prolonged Popular War tendency by Borge. Many private-enterprise Nicaraguans, as well as some Sandinistas, have come to believe that Wheelock is not a Marxist. "Watch what we do, not what we say," he admonishes anyone trying to analyze the Sandinista Front.

The Sandinistas promised political democracy and a mixed economy before reaching power, and they supposedly committed themselves in a secret accord more than a year ago to establish a timetable leading to national elections. But Nicaraguan democrats take more encouragement from the divided nature of power in Nicaragua than from any signed document. In general, the state of relative freedom that exists today in Nicaragua reflects the ability of freedom's advocates to wheel and deal within a system that is more accurately described as a nine-headed authoritarian one than as a totalitarian one. In trying to assess whether the Nicaraguans are establishing totalitarian or democratic institutions, the first question is whether they are going to establish real institutions of any kind, or whether the country will just continue to operate as an interplay of personalities.

THE JUDICIARY, for example, was completely restaffed, but the new judges are the product of the same legal educational system that trained the old judges, and the laws that they enforce are still largely the ones they inherited. Like Somoza, the Sandinistas have shown a willingness to bend the legal system to their purposes. In December 1979, the Sandinistas created nine special tribunals of three people each to try thousands of former Somoza followers as war criminals. At least half the prisoners were members of the National Guard who had thought their records were clean and, as a result, had gone to Red Cross camps or stayed in their homes when other guardsmen fled to Honduras and Miami. The existing criminal code, under which there was no death penalty, was the basis for judging them. During the course of the trials, the International Commission of Jurists and the Inter-American Human Rights Committee sent delegations to Nicaragua and made reports critical of the trial process. The jurists' commission said many former National Guardsmen were being convicted of guilt by association rather than of actual crimes. In a private section, intended only for the Nicaraguan government, the commission criticized the lack of judicial experience of the tribunal members and the absence of normal legal processes, and alleged that the tribunals were not impartial. Some of the tribunal members were said to be relatives of people who had suffered at National Guard hands.

More criticism came from José Esteban González, head of the Nicaraguan Permanent Commission of Human Rights, an independent organization that was founded in the twilight of the Somoza regime and that gets some of its financial support from groups such as the World Council of Churches. González complained of the slowness of the process and charged that some prisoners were mistreated, that others had disappeared, and that some were in jail without justification. When the Sandinistas tired of listening to the man who had once defended them, they set up a rival human rights organization, denied him access to the jails, and finally arrested him and charged him with violation of state security. Conviction would have carried a maximum penalty of three years in jail, but González's friends talked to the right Sandinistas and

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the charges were dropped within a week.

In February of this year, justice officials brought the war crimes trials of the Somoza followers to an abrupt close. They said 6,310 people had been tried or investigated in the preceding 14 months. Of that number, they said, 4,331 people were now serving sentences ranging from one to 30 years. They said about 1,700 people had been freed, because they were found innocent, were pardoned, or had the charges dismissed. They said about 300 cases had appeals pending. No complete list was ever made public of the names of those arrested, pardoned, released, or sentenced.

AMONG the institutions whose condition gives clues to the state of freedom in Nicaragua is the beleaguered and divided, but surviving, Roman Catholic church. Many people think of the Nicaraguan revolution as the church's revolution, but two years after the triumph, most of the church hierarchy looks with skepticism on the process over which the Sandinistas are presiding. Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo has become one of the forces around which the opposition rallies. Although there is no indication that the existence of the church itself is threatened, the archbishop dislikes the practice of sending young Nicaraguans to Cuba for several months of schooling during their formative years. Information is scarce on this, but at least several hundred—and perhaps more than 1,000—Nicaraguan children have studied on Cuba's Isle of Youth. The archbishop also worries about plans to "reform" the educational system toward emphasis on the class struggle.

Another major institution, the press, is a mixed bag of regime-controlled organs, Sandinista sympathizers, and outright opposition. There are decrees that restrict news coverage of food shortages, politics, and armed clashes, but in practice these do not seem seriously to hamper the flow of information. All television is controlled by the Sandinistas and used accordingly. On July 7, for example, the director of the Sandinista television system banned Archbishop Obando y Bravo from Nicaraguan TV. The regime also controls two radio stations outright and influences several others through the adept placing of advertising and patronage. Opposition political parties can buy radio time, but they may find it being allotted at, say, six a.m. on Sundays. Only two stations of any significance can be considered to be either independent or of the opposition. Two other stations that were associated with the opposition but presented almost no news lost their transmitters to political violence in March, but one of them has been collecting money to rebuild.

The press in Nicaragua is synonymous with the Chamorro family, and they are print people. They are, in fact, a family newspaper monopoly, though hardly a monolith. Family members publish all three daily newspapers that appear in Nicaragua, with attitudes toward the Sandinistas that range from love to hate. It was the assassination of *La Prensa* publisher Pedro Joaquin Chamorro in January 1978 that provided the catalyst in uniting most Nicaraguans against Anastasio Somoza. Today *La Prensa* is flourishing under Pedro Joaquin Jr. and criticizing the Sandinistas at every turn. One brother of the martyred publisher and the majority of his employees left more than a year ago to found *El Nuevo Diario*, which gives what is termed "critical support" to the government. Younger son Carlos Fernando Chamorro is editor of the official Sandinista newspaper, *Barricada*. Both of the new papers make a practice of criticizing the bourgeoisie, the traditional political parties, private enterprise groups, Yankee imperialism, and, especially, *La Prensa*.

La Prensa, however, gives as well as it takes. The paper's style is traditionally flamboyant and combative. It was that way 50 years ago under the ancestors of today's Chamorros, and it is that way today. The 45 years of Somoza family rule were 45 years of Chamorro family opposition. The two years of Sandinista rule have entailed nearly two years of criticism from *La Prensa*. The paper uses its news pages to report the story or the angle the other media ignore. It uses its editorials and columns for strong commentary by the newspaper's staff, by outsiders such as the archbishop, and by diplomats and politicians from Latin American countries with undisputed democratic credentials, such as Venezuela and Costa Rica. *La Prensa*'s cartoons often take digs at the Sandinistas.

At one point, Carlos Fernando Chamorro suggested in an editorial in *Barricada* that *La Prensa* had become so reactionary that it ought to close down. That is the last thing his brother has in mind. Pedro Joaquin Jr. likes to say that the truth lies in the press run. By that standard, Nicaraguan readers are unquestionably with *La Prensa*. Reliable estimates place *La Prensa*'s paid circulation at 70,000 to 75,000, which is thought to be three or four times the paid circulation of *Barricada* and *El Nuevo Diario* combined.

THE ONLY concession the Sandinistas make to the usual idea of political liberty is the continued existence of a half-dozen non-Sandinista political parties, five of them in open opposition. One of them is the Nicaraguan Democratic movement of Alfonso Robelo. Robelo describes his party as social democratic, but it has been unsuccessful in efforts to join the Socialist International because of the SI's support for the Sandinista Front, which maintains observer status there. The other significant party is the Democratic Conservative party, descendant of what was traditionally the leading opposition to Somoza. There are also a Social Christian party, a social democratic group separate from Robelo's, and a splinter of Somoza's old Liberal party that began opposing him a number of years ago. In addition, there is the Popular Social Christian party, which gives partial support to the Sandinistas. Politicians are prohibited from declaring themselves candidates for office, but the parties are

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free to do other things, such as criticize the government, hold membership drives, and advertise on billboards. Almost any public event they attempt, however, produces some kind of clash with Sandinista police or members of the Sandinista youth movement. Robelo's party has suffered the most from these groups, being forced by mass violence to cancel two major rallies in the past year. The Democratic Conservatives have held several rallies on a smaller scale, proceeding despite some opposition from police officials on the spot.

WHAT IS alternately called a "dialogue" or "forum" is under way between the Sandinista Front and the five opposition parties, but it is given little chance of achieving anything. The Sandinistas and the five parties can't even agree about what they are negotiating. The parties want to talk about changing the domestic political environment and the Sandinistas want to convince the parties to join their campaign against alleged US intervention in Nicaragua.

The wrinkle in this is that those campaigning for traditional political democracy and those who make up the leadership of private enterprise are essentially the same people. In the declining days of the Somoza dynasty, they learned to use economic power to achieve political ends. It was the joining of most of Nicaraguan private enterprise to the guerrilla battle that produced the potent mix of money and guns that Somoza's National Guard could not contain. Over the past two years, in dealings with the Sandinistas, Nicaragua's politicians and private enterprise people have again mixed their economic and political ends, calling for guarantees against confiscations at the same time that they demand elections and guarantees of free press and religious thought.

To realize the now discarded election promise of a year ago, the cotton growers hinted that they would not plant cotton, Nicaragua's leading export. The Sandinistas finally promised, and the farmers planted, but after the seeds had sprouted, the Sandinistas said there would be no elections before 1985 and hinted that the electoral system might be different from the traditional Western variety. Since then, however, the Sandinistas have gone out of their way to assure private farmers that their role in Nicaraguan life is secure and, to a lesser extent, have done the same with business and industry. Confiscations and the fear of them have virtually ended in agriculture, leaving private farmers in control of 80 percent of the country's production. Confiscations also are supposed to be over in industry but still occur intermittently.

It appears the Sandinistas are gambling that the private sector will be quiet about formal political liberty once it is obvious that pocketbooks are secure, though they never have given a clear explanation of why they don't want to put their popularity on the line in elections. At times they say it is a question of the lack of electoral infrastructure and tradition and the necessity to accomplish more important reconstruction tasks first. At other times they say "the people already voted" by supporting them against Somoza. It requires no sophisticated polling, however, to conclude that the majority of Nicaraguans are disillusioned today with the young men they swept into power and would vote against them if given the chance. The other argument against general elections, from the Sandinista standpoint, is that it would force their differences into the open once campaigning began.

The Sandinistas like to say that they did not fight for nearly 20 years to rid Nicaragua of one kind of foreign influence, the United States, only to turn it over to another, the Soviet bloc. At the same time, however, Tomás Borge is busy beefing up his state security operation with Cuban expertise, something he acknowledges by saying the Cubans know a lot about state security. Humberto Ortega is also using large numbers of Cubans in training an army and police force that already numbers at least 30,000 and is expected to grow to 50,000. The remainder of the Cubans in the country are primarily doctors and teachers working in isolated areas that lacked medical care and education before, plus some who work in the cultural ministry. In relative terms, the Cuban presence is strongest on the Atlantic Coast, where the population is a mixture of indigenous tribes, English-speaking descendants of black West Indians, and people of Spanish descent. The reputedly strong Cuban presence at military posts in that area set off disturbances last October in the town of Bluefields in which several people died. In the succeeding months, dissatisfaction with the Sandinistas over a number of issues, including food distribution and governmental efforts to alter the communal pattern of land ownership, has caused about 3,000 indigenous people, primarily Miskito Indians, to flee across the border into Honduras.

THE UNITED STATES is trying to balance the Cuban influence and the less obvious Soviet presence with a large aid program, though a substantial portion of it was suspended recently by the Reagan administration. Among other Western governments, Venezuela and Mexico have a significant presence with their oil assistance. Mexico and Venezuela both theoretically want to serve as moderating influences on the Sandinistas, but in practice Mexico often seems to be giving them unreserved backing. For example, when the Reagan administration decided to withhold aid over the issue of arms supplies to Salvadoran guerrillas, Mexico quietly doubled the amount of its oil assistance. At the same time, Mexico maintains only superficial contacts with the internal opposition. By contrast, Venezuela, through an active ambassador with direct access to Venezuelan president Luis Herrera Campins, provides strong public support for Alfonso Robelo and other opposition figures, the church hierarchy, and *La Prensa*.

The US embassy, though supporting the goals of

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the opposition in Nicaragua, often has played a mediating role by maintaining contact with some of the top Sandinistas, particularly Jaime Wheelock and the Ortega brothers, and non-Sandinistas who have served in the government. To a large extent, it has been the existence of the aid program that has kept the door to these people open for the United States. It is significant that when the first major crisis occurred in the government with the resignation of Alfonso Robelo from the junta more than a year ago, the Sandinistas, despite their anti-Yankee rhetoric, turned to the American ambassador, Lawrence A. Pezzullo, to open a line of communication to the opposition. When they might have chosen a Cuban, a Venezuelan, a Mexican, or even a Nicaraguan, they chose the ambassador from the United States.

Ted and Fritz and John and Gary and . . .

The Marathon Commences

by Morton Kondracke

With three years to go until the convention, but probably only two until some state's first straw vote, it's Richard Nixon versus Ronald Reagan at the head of the field for the 1984 Democratic presidential nomination. Dwight Eisenhower lolls along in third place, followed by an assortment of Nelson Rockefellers (including one real Rockefeller), some Earl Warrens, and several boy wonders on the order of Charles Percy and Harold Stassen.

Without pushing analogies too far, there are some parallels between the Democratic contenders and GOP heroes of the past and present. Edward Kennedy's partisans like to view him as the Ronald Reagan of the Democratic party—champion of its most committed wing, stirring communicator of its most deeply held values, idol of an unshakable hard core of perhaps 35 percent of its rank and file. Walter Mondale is no Tricky Fritz, but he does bring to the 1984 race many of the political assets that made Nixon a winner in 1968: experience both as a senator and as vice president, a wide (if not exactly frenzied) following in the party based on diligent political service, a centrist image, and a well-tended organization.

Make no mistake. Even though the first caucus is still two and a half years away, the 1984 race is on. Both Kennedy and Mondale have formed political action committees to raise funds for Democratic candidates and to enhance their influence in the party. The Democratic National Committee allowed Kennedy and Mondale—but no one else—to place two representatives each on the newly formed Hunt commission to draft rules for the 1984 nominating process. Each candidate regularly sends emissaries to national committee meetings and other party functions to schmooze with the pols and show that the candidate cares. And associates of both men are quite open about the rivalry, and quite eager to put down the opponent.

For the record, the only poll so far conducted on 1984, taken late this March by Peter Hart and Associates, showed Kennedy and Mondale running neck-and-neck among California's Democrats at 38 percent to 37 percent, with Kennedy leading by margins of two and three to one among blacks, Hispanics, and liberals, and Mondale leading among conservative Democrats and whites over 35 years old. Hart judges Kennedy to be the "point man" among traditional Democratic constituent groups and says "no other Democrat has the base that Kennedy does," but he adds there is no way to tell yet whether Kennedy's base is a Reagan-sized 35 percent or something smaller.

One other sample suggests that if Kennedy has an intense following among Democratic constituencies, Mondale is marginally ahead among professionals. CBS News questioned 324 of the 369 members of the Democratic National Committee this spring and found that 29 percent would most like Mondale to campaign for congressional candidates in their states and 13 percent most wanted Kennedy. The majority of the DNC members had no 1984 preference, but when pushed, 32 percent preferred Mondale, 14 percent Kennedy, and 17 percent others. As CBS noted, however, the current DNC is composed of politicians who supported Jimmy Carter by three to one over Kennedy in 1980. (Still, only one committee member, a man from Guam, volunteered that he wanted Carter to come campaign in his territory.)

If Mondale and Kennedy should falter or decide for some reason not to make the race, there is a gaggle of other potential contenders thinking about running and furiously making speeches around the country. Probably the best known is Senator John Glenn of Ohio, who is a former national hero like Dwight Eisen-

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hower and by 1984, at age 63, will be something of an Ike-like father figure as well. Glenn reportedly has told Ohio Democratic leaders he intends to run, but he has yet to begin assembling a national organization.

Behind Glenn is a group of younger Democrats whose chances seem to lie in the possibility that 1984, like 1960, will be a magic year when the party decides to leap a generation to pick its standardbearer. This group includes Senator Gary Hart of Colorado, 43, the former McGovern campaign manager who has managed to win a following among defense-minded neoconservatives; West Virginia governor Jay Rockefeller, 44, who spent a fortune on TV ads beamed to Washington in his 1980 reelection race and has a 1981 speaking schedule that includes Denver, Miami, Atlanta, and Louisville; Kentucky governor John Y. Brown, 47, the former fried chicken magnate who's taken seriously as the man who dismantled patronage in his state without forfeiting his popularity; Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey, 38, the former Rhodes scholar and professional basketball player who's become a tax and energy policy heavyweight but who is up for reelection in 1984; Governor Jerry Brown of California, 43, who insists he only wants to be a senator for now; Senator Joe Biden of Delaware, 38, who also denies he's running; and Governor Jim Hunt of North Carolina, 44, chairman of the new Democratic commission on presidential nominations.

On the Kennedy (49)-Mondale (53) side of the generation gap, it's also believed that former Florida governor Reuben Askew has serious presidential ambitions and that New York governor Hugh Carey, former New Orleans mayor Moon Landrieu, and even former Democratic chairman and Mideast negotiator Robert Strauss have periodic attacks of the malady.

BUT FOR NOW this is a Kennedy-Mondale affair. Mondale is the better organized, but Kennedy is still able to touch the hearts of the faithful and actually to defend their interests in Congress. Both candidates seem to be trying to develop new, more pragmatic political identities for themselves and the Democratic party. Both prefer to call themselves "progressive" lately rather than "liberal," for example. But even though aides try to claim that Kennedy is the father of deregulation and though he has converted his national health insurance plan into a means of regulating private insurers, Kennedy inevitably emerges as the more "liberal" of the two. Mondale, once the sponsor of CIA reforms and national daycare centers, has had his liberalism tempered by four years in the vice presidency. And now he has southern support to protect and has been spending time with Texas oil men and New York bank economists to learn how that half thinks.

Neither Kennedy nor Mondale has announced that he is a candidate, of course, but they are both less coy (Mondale especially) than candidates usually are at this stage. Kennedy tells interviewers that he is thinking right now only about his duties as a senator and his reelection race in Massachusetts next year, but members of his staff assume he will run and apparently have not been told to pretend otherwise. But Kennedy's press secretary, speechwriter, and chief in-house political adviser, Robert Shrum, insists that no strategy books have been prepared or meetings held to discuss 1984.

MONDALE, meanwhile, makes it clear that although he's made no final decisions, he is actively exploring his chances for 1984 and has decided to pass up a run for the Senate to do so. One of his political associates says, "I'd be lying to you if I told you we haven't talked about 1984—at length." According to political analyst Alan Baron, Mondale is "better organized, at an earlier stage, than any other non-incumbent in history." Mondale is attached to the Washington office of the Chicago law firm of Winston and Strawn, headed by his close friend John Riley, who was once a Kennedy adviser. The firm also has provided space for two key Mondale aides, Jim Johnson, top strategist for the 1984 effort, and Robert Torricelli, a former Carter campaign operative who handles Mondale's daily activities.

Two other longtime Mondale associates, Michael Berman and Richard Moe, have jobs at other law firms but remain on call, and the 1984 team includes several 1980 Carter aides, including legal counsel Tim Smith, rules expert Elaine Kamarck, field operations manager John Rendon, and delegate-counter Tom Donilon. Mondale's PAC, called the Committee for the Future of America, is modeled after Ronald Reagan's Citizens for the Republic. It will give money directly to some Democratic candidates, but more importantly, according to Mondale associates, will pay expenses for Mondale and his operatives to travel around the country helping candidates raise money and support—and, of course, helping Mondale win allies.

One major event for the Mondale PAC was a Chicago fundraiser on June 16 which raised $80,000 and was attended by some of the most glittering figures in the Illinois party, minus Chicago mayor Jane Byrne, who supported Kennedy in 1980. The event's reception committee included Dan Rostenkowski, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, most of Chicago's other Democratic representatives, former senator Adlai Stevenson, Cook County assessor Tom Hynes (Mondale's chief agent in Chicago), and county states attorney Richard M. Daley, son of the late mayor Richard J., who was one of the Kennedy family's closest political allies. According to one of Mondale's top aides, the Chicago event provided the campaign with "an excellent long-term building list."

Compiling lists—especially money lists—is a major activity for botn campaigns. So far Mondale has done it by holding benefit receptions, while Kennedy's PAC, the Fund for a Democratic Majority, has concentrated on direct mail. Kennedy aides say most of his PAC's

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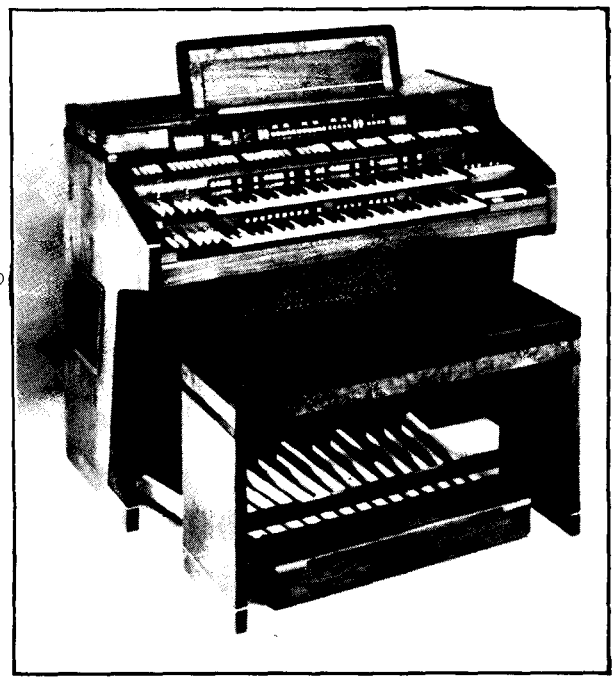

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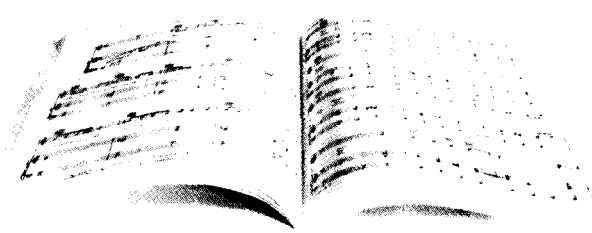

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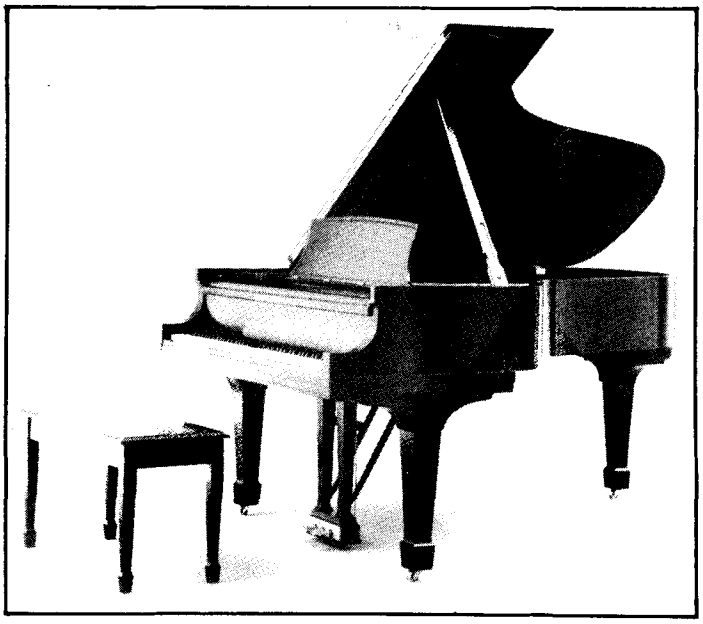

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proceeds will go directly to candidates. For the period ending June 30, Kennedy's operation took in $300,500, Mondale's $230,000. It's a mark of the rivalry they feel that Mondale's operatives went on a telephoning blitz just before the Federal Elections Commission reporting deadline in hopes of collecting enough to beat Kennedy.

Another mark of the rivalry is the jockeying between the two sides over places on the Hunt commission. Mondale aides want it to be known that Kennedy intended to appoint a woman to the commission—1980 campaign aide Susan Estrich—but pulled her name back when he saw that Mondale was naming two "heavyweights," John Riley and Robert Torricelli. Implication: Kennedy is sexist. Kennedy's side acknowledges that Estrich was replaced by Scott Lang, but claims it's a mark of Mondale's sexism that he never considered appointing a woman to the panel at all. Another indication of the rivalry is that Mondale tried to block the appointment of Kennedy associate Mark Siegel as co-chairman of the Hunt commission's technical advisory committee, a panel of 19 rules experts who will advise the commission on the implications of proposed rules changes. Siegel stayed, apparently after Kennedy intervened with national committee officials.

THE WONDER is that either candidate would want formally appointed delegates on the commission, considering some of the battles likely to occur there that offer no advantages to either man. Both candidates, for example, seem to agree that the party needs to have more mayors, governors, representatives, and party officials attending the national convention as uncommitted delegates. Such officials tend to be white males, yet the party's charter (after a little-noticed rules committee decision in 1980) virtually imposes quotas requiring not only that half the delegates be women but also that blacks, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans have seats at the convention in proportion to the support their ethnic groups gave to the national ticket in 1980. The party won't be able to have more pols and keep its quotas, so somebody is bound to be offended, whichever way Scott Lang and Carl Wagner (Kennedy's men), and Torricelli and Riley vote.

Important as organization and rules may prove to be two and three years from now, what's likely to be most decisive is the identity that each candidate conveys for himself and the party. "The guy who defines the election is going to win," one Mondale adviser says. "First, the candidates have to define themselves, define an image, and then inculcate it into people's minds. It's a massive job, and it's got to begin early. Ninety percent of what a candidate says in the actual election year is discounted as politics, so you've got to define who you are before that. That's what Mondale is doing now."

Out of office for the first time in 20 years, Mondale has given himself six months for intensive study and has limited his politicking in order (says his aide Jim Johnson) to "rethink, refresh, and renew himself and reformulate the Democratic case." This winter and spring, according to aides, Mondale read more than 30 books. He went to Europe twice—in April for the Bilderberg conference in Switzerland and visits with Mitterrand and Giscard in Paris, in June for an intensive course in defense at NATO headquarters, followed by a trip to Israel to greet Menachem Begin, endorse the Iraqi reactor raid, and receive an honorary degree at Hebrew University. (Almost simultaneously, Kennedy received the Mount Scopus Award from the American Friends of Hebrew University in New York City, and denounced the Reagan administration's UN vote condemning the Iraqi raid.)

As part of his rethinking process, Mondale also has had economic and energy seminars laid on for him by the University of South Carolina, the Natomas Oil Company in California, and a group of 25 Texas oil and gas men assembled by Arthur Temple, vice chairman of Time Inc. He has had other private sessions with economists Henry Kaufman, Lester Thurow, Barry Bosworth, and Walter Heller, and is scheduled to attend an Aspen Institute conference with a group of US and Soviet arms control specialists in late July.

"This process will go on through the presidential cycle," says Johnson, "but it will be the dominant mode in 1981. Going into 1982, we will be concentrating on substance and politics. In early 1982, the demands of politics will be such that there will be less time for reflection."

"This is not an effort to create a new man," Johnson says. "He has his basic beliefs and principles. The idea is not to find a new philosophy, but go through a thorough analysis and review of problems that need new solutions. We think 1984 will be an unusually substantive election. People will want to know what the president will actually do. For somebody to skip this kind of substantive review would be to make an enormous mistake."

MONDALE has yet to unveil any new formulations of the Democratic case. He is supposed to begin doing so this fall. So far Mondale's speeches have been standard—and rather eloquent—statements of the new Democratic conventional wisdom: change the programs, but keep the party's traditional compassion; build a stronger defense, but remember human rights. At the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs in Austin, Texas, for example, Mondale acknowledged that Democrats had ignored inflation and gone overboard on regulation in the past. "Where we overregulated, we should cut back. Where we fueled inflation, we should restrain our deficits. Where we overtaxed, we should push for tax relief. Where government had been clumsy, or expensive, or intrusive—we should make government better. On that everyone can agree." But he went on to say how much good the government has done since the New Deal,

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and how much harm it would do to repeal or reduce those programs. "All Americans want this president [Reagan] to do well. We will support reform. We will accept sacrifices. We will welcome strong leadership. But do not ask us in the name of fiscal conservatism to accept an agenda that is selfish, wrong-headed, and cruel. Because that we will never accept." It is not yet clear what cuts and reforms Mondale will accept.

KENNEDY, by contrast, has been dealing with specific programs because they come up every day in the Senate—notably at the Labor and Public Welfare Committee, where Kennedy chose to be ranking minority member, giving up Judiciary. Kennedy made the switch, according to one of his allies, as part of his presidential strategy—putting himself in position to defend classic liberal programs, with large Democratic constituencies, against the onslaught of the Reagan Republicans. By mobilizing the committee's Democrats and winning support from Republicans Robert Stafford of Vermont and Lowell Weicker of Connecticut, Kennedy managed to derail—albeit only temporarily—the administration's plan to fold 100 health, education, and social welfare programs into no-strings-attached block grants. Kennedy also has held citizens' issues forums to expose the impact that Reagan cuts will have, and has attracted for them the kind of television coverage that only an official Senate hearing would normally get.

Kennedy's aide Bob Shrum is anxious to point out that his man "did not fight over every program" slated for cuts. "He picked those that mattered." Of $52 billion in programs in Labor and Public Welfare's jurisdiction, said Shrum, Reagan wanted to cut out $13 billion. "The Democrats fought over three billion dollars' worth, and won on $1.5 billion. We fought against block grants because they are the first step toward abolition of all federal funding for those programs." Shrum thinks Kennedy has the inaccurate image of a down-the-line defender of the old liberal faith, and points out that Kennedy began holding deregulation hearings on airlines in 1973, began calling for an end to gold-plated military technology long before it became fashionable, and has devised a tax cut package emphasizing productivity. "I'd rather have the story accurately told," says Shrum, "but the fact that he's consistently defended things—especially this year, when it's tough—is not only the right thing to do, but it's also politically effective. I think it'll all come around. What Kennedy is standing for is where the country will end up. If Reagan economics doesn't work, people will want government back as a force in the economy. If they do work, people will want to return to the old agenda again, the one that Kennedy has been expounding."

Meanwhile, Kennedy continues to generate the rhetorical electricity that dazzled the Democratic National Convention last year, socking it hard to the Reagan administration, the new right, the Moral Majority, and the National Rifle Association. Samples: "On the issue of handgun control, I will never give up and I will never give in." "I am convinced that the answer to the problems of progressives is not for us to pretend that somehow we are similar to the Republicans. In 1981 we cannot permit the gains of a generation to be set aside by the agents of special privilege . . . by the negativism of the new right, or by those who dare to call themselves the Moral Majority." "Certainly we must trim waste and needless spending, and eliminate unnecessary regulation . . . but we must not eliminate education loans [or] destroy the health care programs that have increased the length and raised the quality of our lives. Instead of cutting out school lunches, let us cut off expensive business lunches that are nothing more than food stamps for the rich. Instead of closing down housing programs that provide shelter for millions in need, let us close off tax shelters that provide loopholes for the wealthy and land speculators. . . ." And so on.

Almost every time Kennedy's rhetoric has gone head to head with Mondale's, Kennedy has won out—at the 1980 convention and (most embarrassingly for Mondale) at the Hubert Humphrey Day dinner this April in Mondale's home state of Minnesota. Kennedy gave a rousing "I am proud to be a Democrat" speech, attacking Reagan and his "special interest budget," and brought down a house full of 4,000 Democratic-Farmer-Labor party members—Mondale's people. Instead of matching the act, Mondale retreated to a brief message of thanks for past support.

WHEN YOU ASK Mondale aides what they will do about Mondale's dullness problem, they decline to admit it exists. "I think we have a base of support from all parts of the country," said one, "which gives ample evidence that this is not a problem. When you see the kind of people who'll stand up at the appropriate time, it'll represent a statement by these party leaders. They wouldn't support somebody they don't think can win." The Mondale people think that Kennedy can't win a general election, that this will be obvious to party leaders, and that the Democrats will not do in 1984 what the Republicans did in 1964. In effect, they think, Kennedy is not so much Ronald Reagan as Barry Goldwater.

On the other side, though, the Kennedy people don't think Walter Mondale is so much Richard Nixon as Edmund Muskie—the Democratic establishment's hands-down favorite after 1972 and before 1976 who promptly flopped as a presidential candidate because he lacked a loyal following and a consistent message. Some Kennedy people, too, are prepared (at the proper moment) to try to pin the errors of the Carter administration on Mondale, and to allege he didn't do enough to oppose them. It's all still mercifully far away, but be advised—the teams are forming, and the knives already have been sharpened.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Muppets and Other Capers

Charles Grodin, an actor whose biggest fan I am not, made some sharp comments in a recent interview. Talking about current American films, he said, "There is no proper celebration of, or connection to, the American culture as it actually exists. Art is supposed to enlighten people, but we're going to have a whole generation that didn't learn anything about life from the movies."

You don't have to exaggerate the stature of the American film past to share Grodin's worries. My own view, expressed before, is that, in the main, US films didn't come into congruence with US realities—equivalent to what a few European films had been doing with European life every year from the beginning—until the late 1960s; and that US rigor was co-opted, within four or five years, into one more kind of glitz. But from the beginning up to (say) *Ordinary People*, our films contained enough recognizable data to inform us that our lives were at least known to exist, were at least being romanticized.

Most current smashes don't even do this. *Raiders of the Lost Ark, Excalibur, Outland, Clash of the Titans, Dragonslayer* don't encompass all subjects now available or in process, but their undemanding, *unimaginative* fantasies seem to swamp us. (By the way, most of them involved British production participation in some degree. Tax reasons? Labor costs?) Their size and success make the film scene seem spectacularly stupefied. Fortunes are spent on these films aimed at the high-school mentality, whatever the actual ages, and bigger fortunes are being returned. The film stars of the future are apparently going to be the special-effects wizards.

Outside of some critics to whom any trip to Movieland is a test of true love for film, the people who may be best pleased by this turn of events are the Moral Majority. No sex, no thought, the ethics of unquestioned authority, the morality of melodrama—what more could the MM ask for?

Grodin's new film is *The Great Muppet Caper*, and this does not seem to me a wry comment on his interview. The Muppets, like *Peter Pan*, are products of true imagination, without age boundaries, that does not ask you to be younger or older, or more or less innocent. When Barrie's Captain Hook, at the end of a long dark soliloquy, swears the oath "Bicarbonate of soda," children whoop (I've heard 'em) and grown-ups chuckle (I've joined 'em). It's an age-less joke. So is most of the fun in the Muppets.

A good deal of *The Great Muppet Caper* takes place in London (more British business incentives?) where, for reasons too easy to explain, the plot has taken the group. My one complaint about the picture is that not as many of the characters get as much to do as in their first film: here it's mostly Kermit and Miss Piggy. (During the first film, people wondered how Kermit rode a bicycle. Possibly in response to that, a lot of them get on bikes this time, and Miss Piggy roars away on a motorcycle.)

But the songs, as before, are good enough, and what's particularly appealing is the way live actors work with the Muppets. The sterling Diana Rigg has never been more serious, therefore never funnier, than with the Muppets. And the uncanniest sequence I've seen in a long time is the one in which Grodin falls for Miss Piggy. There's a two-shot, quite close up, in which he tells her how attractive he thinks she is and how he's beginning to feel, and she looks up with long-lashed eyes. It's not, nothing like, the reverse situation of King Kong and Fay Wray—it's neither ludicrous nor pathological. It happens in the fantasy land where the Muppets live and mingle with those pokey characters, real people. It's Grodin's entry into a territory of unfettered imagining that makes the moment both credible and amazing.

I often read restaurant reviews in newspapers and magazines, and I've discovered a disconcerting fact. The reviewers sometimes give good ratings to restaurants whose only recommended dishes are appetizers and desserts. For many a two-starred restaurant (or however it's graded), the main courses are rated mediocre or even poor.

Blake Edwards's new comedy *S.O.B.* deserves an analogous review. Virtually everything except the main plot zips along amusingly. It's a film about Hollywood—the acronym stands for Standard Operational Bullshit—and it happens to be the second picture this month that accidentally echoes a recent real-life event. *The Fan* did it with the John Lennon murder; *S.O.B.* does it with the *Heaven's Gate* fiasco. Edwards's difference is that the flop film within his film is saved.

Films Worth Seeing

Breaker Morant. Still widely available. Australian film of Boer War court-martial opens no new dramatic or moral ground but is excellently made.

Bustin' Loose. Just an excuse to see Richard Pryor. Well, almost any excuse will do.

The Four Seasons. Alan Alda and five other comic pros give exceptional zest to this super TV sitcom that Alda wrote and directed.

Richard's Things. Liv Ullmann and a welcome newcomer named Amanda Redman as a widow and her dead husband's mistress who become lovers. Their acting gives this English film a depth not in the script.

SK

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Julie Andrews (Mrs. Edwards) is the star of the interior film, and *S.O.B.* opens with a cutesy nursery-toy number done by the freckle-nosed Andrews. This is a key sequence from the interior film produced by Andrews's screen husband, Richard Mulligan, and directed by William Holden, and you know right away that Edwards's script is in trouble because no such sequence would have been filmed by two allegedly smart cookies in 1981. The whole first sequence is patently a set-up—by Edwards—for some kind of reversal. That reversal, the brainstorm that redeems the flop, is to sex it up. So later we see that opening musical sequence revised—cootchie instead of cutesy—and the trouble is that it's just as bad the second way as the first, only differently. The number ends with Andrews, having been given a liberating injection between takes by a doctor, baring her breasts. The sad truth is that Julie Andrews, as a temperamental film star, is just not interesting, and the possibly sadder truth is that her breasts don't make her more so. The main plot, the flop and rescue of an expensive film, is wretched. The fact that Edwards was spurred to write this script by an experience of his own doesn't redeem it any more than does Mrs. Edwards's bosom.

But the stuff around the main plot is often very funny. Robert Preston as an "in" Hollywood physician, a Dr. "Feelgood" who is always Johnny-on-the-shot for paying patients; Holden, as an old director who knows exactly how competent and how corrupt he is; Robert Webber as a hard-pressed press agent; Stuart Margolin, as Andrews's creepy homosexual social secretary have most of the diverting stuff, in Malibu and in various bars. Mulligan, as the distraught producer at first trying numbly to kill himself, then frenetically trying to save his picture, is miscast. The picture would have been considerably better if Mulligan and Holden had switched parts.

As Billy Wilder has often done, sometimes successfully, Edwards uses death as a farce ingredient, and it gives the secondary material some laughs. There's a running gag—yes, gag—about an actor who dies of a heart attack on the beach outside Mulligan's home right at the beginning; and there's a finish with the filching of a corpse from a funeral parlor evidently suggested by a story about John Barrymore. Harry Stradling's cinematography has a brassy California glint about it even at night, and the clothes by Theadora Van Runkle, who did the costumes for *Bonnie and Clyde* among many others, are superb. Every once in a while when a moment seems particularly right, you realize that it's partly because of the way Van Runkle dressed the people.

But these are all trimmings. Trouble is, you can't go to a film the way you can go to a restaurant and skip the main course.

The liberal pieties of 'Hill Street Blues.'

Off the Prigs

by Mark Crispin Miller

"Hill Street Blues" is not a hit. Out of 97 regular series in the 1980-81 season, the new police drama ranked only 83rd in popularity. Nevertheless, Fred Silverman, former head of NBC, claimed to like the show, and expected it to pick up next season. In this case, he probably was not relying on his instincts. Fred Silverman's instincts are a national disgrace, having brought us a number of emetic divertissements whose reruns will foul the airways for the next 30 years: "Charlie's Angels," "Fantasy Island," "The Love Boat," and too many more. "Hill Street Blues" is in a different class, and ordinarily would have a very short half-life, if subjected to Silverman's usual standards. For once, however, Silverman seemed to have heeded America's television critics, who have cheered the show with an outcry of defensive praise unprecedented in the history of television.

By and large, they like it for two reasons. First of all, it strikes them as very realistic, and so they tend, in their plaudits, to use certain adjectives that suggest the cast of characters in a porno remake of *Snow White*: "gutsy," "gritty," "racy," "raunchy," "punchy," "tough," and "steamy." And yet they also applaud the show's correctness as a liberal statement: the show is good because it contains little violence and no offensive ethnic stereotypes. While its characters are ethnically diverse, enthused one columnist in a recent issue of *TV Guide*, they are simply "a gathering of *human beings* who just happen to have widely different last names. (You know, like real life.). . . . All [these] characters are so genuine and worthy, it's impossible not to like them."

NOW THAT'S heart-warming, if not very steamy. In "real life," it seems, there are no ethnic traits, nor any such things as national character, regional identity, or class consciousness. And everyone is equally "genuine and worthy." This is gritty realism? In fact, "Hill Street Blues" is not both true to life and idealized, because such a combination is impossible. A work might either reflect "real life" or transcend it. As it happens, "Hill Street Blues" does neither. Although promising at first, the show soon settled down to do little more than promulgate a tired ideology.

Its "realism" is largely the quick result of a few well-worn cinematic devices. A hand-held camera, for example, lends many scenes the jerky immediacy of a documentary. There is also plenty of inner-city texture. The precinct-house is credibly seedy, the producers having worked hard to see that things break down: the furnishings are dim and battered, the heat goes out, the vending machines (a running gag) have to be beaten regularly. The streets are a mess, like many of the characters, who overrun this perfect squalor in endless sleazy multitudes. Actors jam the foreground, background, middle distance, and stream across the frame from points unknown. Surely no cop show has ever seemed this crowded; this is *French Connection III*, directed by Thomas Malthus. Even the soundtrack is cluttered. The background hubbub nearly drowns out the dialogue, which is no mean feat, since the characters generally bellow as if going deaf. (You know, like real life.)

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Their dialogue also overlaps, charging the action with the sort of rich confusion that we notice every day, in films by Robert Altman.

Although this kind of naturalistic din has suffused many American films since the 1960s, on television it seems like a novelty. The show is also structurally unlike the usual prime-time item. Each episode is more fluid and various than the typical plot-and-subplot arrangement, sustaining at least three unrelated stories at a time. Moreover, things don't wind to a tidy close just before the final credits, but stray into subsequent episodes, as in a soap opera. Such open-endedness, and the anarchic milieu, create an impression of hectic vitality. The impression is not lasting. Once we spot the gimmicks, that air of "realism" disappears, leaving a tissue of clichés, artfully modernized.

The old-fashioned cop show, best represented by Jack Webb's early productions ("Dragnet," "Adam-12"), usually would go like this: two stern half-wits drive around Los Angeles, looking for "suspicious behavior." Although technically policemen, these dank prigs seemed more like social workers from beyond the grave, always butting in and moralizing with dead faces. No one could be whiter than these guardians of the norm, who protected their necropolis from the threat of a faint diversity (creeps, crooks, punks).

SUCH WERE THE TV lawmen of another day, when boys liked girls, skies were blue, and blacks were Negroes. Now, of course, most (some?) of us laugh at those grim squares, preferring a groovier sort of policeman, hip, streetwise, and yet "caring," likably rebellious without losing his authoritative air, 100 percent American and still engagingly ethnic—Kojak, Baretta, Toma, Columbo. Collectively, these cops are not a force of clones, but as diverse an army as any band of bad guys, even as diverse as the very USA.

The Hill Street cops reflect this myth from the top down. The leadership is nicely varied. We have a Spanish-American lieutenant (Rene Enriquez) who runs the plainclothes division; the Polish-American sergeant Phil Esterhaus (Michael Conrad); and an Italian-American in Captain Frank Furillo (Daniel J. Travanti), the man in charge. Because this trio is acceptably motley, like the crowd in a United Way commercial, we are supposed to applaud it automatically. And just in case we miss the point, the show includes a built-in satire of the thick-witted WASP in the character of Howard Hunter (James B. Sikking), commander of a SWAT-type outfit. A large, eager buffoon with an angular jaw and blinding teeth, Hunter is accoutered like Douglas MacArthur and sounds like one of Nixon's henchmen (E. Howard Hunter?), always singing the praises of excessive force in bizarre bureaucratese.

THIS DEVALUATION of the straight white Hunter would seem to place "Hill Street Blues" opposite the likes of "Dragnet," but the shows have much in common. Under the surface of his slight ethnicity, for instance, Captain Furillo is as much a pill as Jack Webb's Sergeant Joe Friday. His heritage is a great device, allowing him the authenticity of being Italian, while letting him overcome the stereotype of being Italian. At first, his looks suggest a perfect synthesis of various streetwise types. (He looks like James Caan wearing Roy Scheider's nose.) But Furillo is no warm and explosive Mediterranean, like Travolta, De Niro, et al. On the contrary, he plays so intently against that type that he seems to be turning to cement right on camera. He never moves his neck, and rarely speaks above a soft, slurred monotone, as if afraid that, if he ever lets go, he might break out into an oily tan and start touching everybody.

Furillo's stiff joints are a sign of integrity. He is, of course, much purer than everyone above him. His superiors are always inviting him out to lunch or breakfast so they can harass him with corrupt advice: he should "play ball," etc. He'll never capitulate, or have a bite, but sits and eyes their loaded plates with monkish disapproval. On the other hand, he unbends slightly among his underlings, sometimes even permitting himself a tight little smirk over their wacky ways.

Furillo's function is to seem superior to everyone around him, so that we can feel superior by identifying with him. This strategy is obvious when it refers to those in power: Frank's various bosses and counterparts in the police establishment are all smooth toadies and pompous fools, easy targets like the overdrawn Hunter. We are meant to look down on them because they are unenlightened. When it comes to the common man, however, the strategy becomes more insidious: through Furillo, we find all the little people—civilians as well as policemen—terribly colorful and cute. Each cop is just an amalgam of certain social and psychological tics, all of them stereotypic. We can look down on these characters because their "foibles" are at once laughable and easy to define.

Belker (Bruce Weitz) is a funky maniac who likes to bite off parts of suspects, yet always phones his mother (hostile/Jewish). There is patrolman Andy Renko (Charles Haid), a loud-mouthed northerner who puts on a Texas accent and always feels slighted (inferiority complex/"good ole boy"). Through this device, the show can include the obligatory cowboy without having to import a real one. J.D. LaRue has a drinking problem and is always scheming (alcoholic/white trash). They are lovably flawed, unglamorous, and weak, presented with the same affectionate contempt that imbues those TV commercials showing "real people" in all their droll impotence.

NOT ALL THE SHOW'S characters are so condescendingly drawn. The derision, in fact, is highly selective, expressing the liberal bias that has made the show a critical success. For instance, there is nothing funny about those cops who represent, however obliquely, the third world. There are two black officers, Hill (Michael Warren) and Washington (Taurean Blacque). One is handsome, diligent, brave, and upright, and so is the other one. (Washington is more flamboyant than Hill, and that's the only difference.) Ray, the Hispanic lieutenant, is another paragon, soft-spoken and attractive in a fatherly way.

The women are also the figments of some earnest liberal (male) imagination. Lucy (Betty Thomas) is a policewoman, not good-looking, but with a great personality: able and dedicated, yet vulnerable. On the other hand, high ratings demand a measure of tease, and so we have the well-groomed Veronica Hamel as Joyce Davenport, who spends her days in the Office of the Public Defender and her nights in the sack with the divorced Furillo. We are supposed to see Davenport as a liberated woman because she acts like an unfriendly man. In moments of post-coital repose, as Furillo lies back resting his neck, she bends grimly over some piece of homework, wearing her lover's shirt and man's glasses. She also calls him, not "Frank," but "Furillo." She is supposed to be much preferable to Furillo's

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ex-wife Fay, a shrill flake whose main function is to assault her ex-husband with labored quips: "Harvey is boiled beef, Frank," she complains of an erstwhile boyfriend. "I want escargot."

All the dialogue is painfully arch and overwritten, no matter who's speaking. Esterhaus's lines are all tortured circumlocution, a bad parody of Damon Runyon, and Conrad struggles mightily to make it funny. But his verbal mannerisms, like Fay's or Hunter's, get lost in the general flood of inept repartee. Aside from rank clichés ("I need you!" "I'd hate to see you get hurt." "It's OK to cry," etc.), there are stunningly clumsy attempts at clever banter: "Lots of workaholics, of which I consider you one, break out in hives at the mere thought of a vacation." "If you want to see battle scars, I've got a whole closetfull." A promotion, says Davenport, will give Frank "more time for the better things in life, namely *moi*." It's all meant to sound snappy and intriguing, like *interesting* people saying *interesting* things, but it only sounds like what you'd overhear in a singles bar for retarded television writers.

The show tries to cover its shallowness with these inanities, and with the various naturalistic techniques. So far, the viewers haven't bought it. Silverman and the critics have blamed the bad time-slot (Saturday at 10:00, 9:00 CST), assuming that a better one will make a big difference. It may not. And why? Because American viewers have such high standards, and consider "Hill Street Blues" overwritten and badly acted? That may seem unlikely. The millions who watch "Real People" or "The John Davidson Show" are probably not too finicky about dramaturgy. On the other hand, they might reject the show's unmistakable smugness, its air of liberal righteousness, its propagandistic pitch disguised as something "gutsy." That is, they may disagree with all those critics who have been campaigning to save "Hill Street Blues" from cancellation: John Freeman (*San Diego Union*), Tom Shales (*Washington Post*), John Voorhees (*Seattle Times*), Tom Dorsey (*Louisville Courier-Journal*), Bill Carter (*Baltimore Evening Sun*), and many more. It could indicate a new awareness, because there are still too many shows like this, piously telling us how to think and "feel" while suggesting a subtle elitism. Such a rejection of "Hill Street Blues" would not be further evidence of any so-called "turn to the right," but simply the repudiation of something dated and offensive. As network television continues its slow decline, the failure of this show would be one more healthy sign of approaching death.

Sophisticated Barbarism

Memoirs of an Anti-Semite by Gregor von Rezzori

(Viking; $13.95)

Memoirs, not confessions: this anti-Semite asks not to be forgiven, he asks to be enjoyed. Enjoying him is not hard; Gregor von Rezzori is a wizard of a writer. There is sin, but there is also style. Rezzori flaunts both. He will leave many readers in a muddle, and he will win many admirers. The man's malice is really elegant. His book is a new avenue through the century's most disgusting decades. It is the persecution of the Jews as told by a dandy.

Rezzori calls his book a novel, and he cannot be blamed for not calling it an autobiography. Fact or fiction, it is a book proudly consecrated to truth. (The last chapter, entitled "Pravda," is an apology for the author's embellishments, and for the author.) The impassioned protagonist of this chronicle of prejudice is Gregor, who was born during the Great War into an aristocratic Austrian family marooned in the Bukovina by the breakup of the empire. His father keeps faith with the imperial ideal; he fusses over a very ceremonial "Germanhood" and—the primary demonstration of his undefeated Austrian patriotism—he hunts. He instills his son with a fitting hatred of the Jews, and of the mind as Jews practice it. As a lad Gregor summers in the country near Czernowitz, while his father valiantly awaits the barbarians, at the frontier with Russia. Gregor attends the university in Vienna; later he is down and out in the slums of Bucharest; he is back in Vienna for the exhilaration of the *Anschluss*; after the war he is in gutted Berlin, and then Munich; and finally he is in Rome, hacking out screenplays, baffled by the 1960s, unimpressed by a new generation's violence and sorry to see Anita Ekberg lose her epochal looks. His ambition was the sporting life, and sex; and he did not want for horses and women. Yet he is left with the memory of a life that has miscarried. His marriages fail, his son dies, his culture disappears.

WHAT HAS all this to do with the Jews? Gregor has a hypothesis about his life. His memoir interprets his life according to the appearance in it of Jews at its most critical moments. Jews, especially the women, have been the instruments of his humiliation. It is a short fall from the amorist to the anti-Semite, because Gregor is a sucker for Jewish women. He is a philo-Semite in bed. He admires the "Oriental" charms of his accommodating Jewesses, and is deeply affected by the ancient tragedy he detects in their eyes. This manner of attraction to Jews has a distinguished provenance; Herder, their friend, praised this "strange people of Asia driven into our regions," and the erotic appeal of Jewish women to his contemporaries in arms against respectability was considerable. Eventually, the sentiment was transformed into its opposite, as it is for Gregor. When the women disappoint, so does the race.

When the Jews were emancipated a new kind of kinkiness was born. Yet it was precisely this kinkiness that would not tolerate their emancipation. Rezzori says it over and over:

> The specifically Jewish quality in Jews had never repelled me so much as the attempt—doomed from the start—to hush it up, cover it over, deny it. The yiddling of the Jews, their jittery gesticulation, their disharmony, their incessant alternation of obsequiousness and presumptuousness, were inescapable and inalienable attributes of their Jewishness. If they acted as one expected them to act, so that one could recognize them at first glance, one was rather pleasantly touched. They were true to themselves—that was estimable. . . . One assumed they would not act like us. If they did so nevertheless, it made them look suspicious. It seemed artificial. It was unsuitable. . . . We saw the so-called assimilated Jews as aping us.

Jews who shook off the ghetto ran the risk, then, of being no longer fascinating. They could no longer provide the

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bored and embattled gentry what it needed most: color.

Color is what Rezzori believes in. Color in writing, color in people, color in history. The principle of his style, as he remarks, is "vividness," a dizzy accumulation of effects and allusions, which results in a kind of driven lyricism. The ethnic cacophany of Central Europe fills Rezzori with wonder. "All through his life he had felt alive only to the extent that the world around him seemed alive." He introduces his Ruthenians and Bessarabians and Armenians (and Jews, if they are still picturesque) with great relish, to exult in their differences; they are all so breathtakingly genuine. It is the tribute of a man who does not know who he is. At a time when *Mitteleuropa* has cast a new spell over many American intellectuals, Rezzori's book reminds that there was something morally and intellectually repulsive about all that rootedness. The author's alienation is entirely appropriate.

So, too, Rezzori reaches far back in time for the borrowed glory of myth. "Even if occurrences had occurred from occurrences," he sums up, "the chain of motifs reached so deep into the past, reached back to the beginning of recorded time, the dawn of history, the golden haze of myth. . . ." Rezzori's father justified himself with talk of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire. Gregor also longs for a mythic transfiguration. This is a familiar modern impertinence, for a man to conflate his grubby little life with a perfect world of old. The language, the characters, the myths—all are ornaments pitted against the ordinary. The struggle against ordinariness was a momentous psychological feature of what transpired in Europe between the wars. It issued in art, but more frequently it issued in politics.

There is no politics in Rezzori. "There was a promise of hope in the atmosphere," he observes of the *Anschluss*, to which he briefly kindles. Soon, however, "I was becoming bored with the Nazi attitude of promise, hope, and expectation, as nothing really happened, and the whole thing was nothing but a great mess with some sordid highlights." Of course much "really happened," but to other people, and our hero is not morally equipped to resist it. He has only an aesthetic attitude toward anti-Semitism. It is so *interesting*. It is not an evil, it is a subject. Rezzori has brilliantly captured the appearances of the prejudice, the way it looked and felt; he has changed the hatred in his heart into a spectacle. The imagination, for which nothing is final, will save him from the consequences of his emotional career.

> I couldn't believe in the truth of reality. One can't believe in a reality that comprises Auschwitz and the Opernball of Vienna at the same time. One simply has to escape into possibilities that make it appear possible. Yet one must not fool around with the dreadful power of invention: a fool can create a reality that drives millions to madness, I know, I know. . . .

But Rezzori is not fooling around; he is fallen. Trapped in his own contemptible history, he smothers it with surfaces. He plays, rather insistently, the dreamer, dissociated from the catastrophe by the sovereign power of fantasy. He will give the truth, but as a dream. (It was not long in the century before Stephen Daedalus's nightmare could be easily topped.) There can be no doubt about the honesty of this man; his reader will be tempted to conclude that anybody big enough to own up to all this meanness can't be small enough to be this mean. But that is the book exactly: big, and very small. And never smaller than in this sentence: "The only dignity to be maintained in our time is the dignity of being among the victims." We have heard this before, but see who says it now. The anti-Semite wants to be taken for a Jew. Not so fast; those victims are yours.

Leon Wieseltier

A Sundered Society

On the Blanket: The H-Block Story by Tim Pat Coogan

(Ward River Press, Dublin)

Mr. Coogan sees H-Block from close-up. His account of the Northern Ireland prison protest and its causes is full of urgent concern but lacks range or focus; it gives the impression of a gallop through a pile of newspaper cuttings and interviews with little sense of direction. "This book was conceived—as so many children are—by accident," writes the author, provoking the response that most children in Ireland are conceived less by accident than by Hobson's Choice, that is, by courtesy of the Catholic church, which severely restricts the sale of contraceptives and prevents any change in Ireland's ban on abortion (also on divorce and homosexual relations). Although Mr. Coogan does not directly relate the "dirty protest" to Ulster toilet training, he writes, "In a faecal society, itself representing a prison in many respects, the H-Block protest began to assume a repellently apt symbolism." He believes that "the terrifying IRA campaign of violence [and other] sicknesses grew out of the diseased nature of Northern Ireland society itself." It is a wonder how some sympathizers with the admittedly worthy goal of Irish unity are able to set Northern Ireland aside as a separate case when they feel like it; if there is such a thing as a faecal society, which I doubt, one should include the whole of Ireland—or of Britain and Ireland—in the abuse.

Mr. Coogan begins with the excrement-smeared cells of some of the prisoners who were "on the blanket," refusing to wear prison-issue clothing or follow normal prison rules, in the Maze prison near Belfast. (His book was written in obvious haste just over a year ago.) The blanket-protest started in 1976 and was given up in January this year, apparently in response to some concessions from the authorities on clothing and procedure; but it was soon followed by the current hunger strike and the deaths which continue—an escalation that Mr. Coogan correctly foresees. Indeed he writes interestingly on what he calls "the physical force school of Irish nationalism," and reminds us of such clarion calls as Padraig Pearse's funeral oration for O'Donovan Rossa—"Life springs from death and from the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations"—and of Terence McSwiney, IRA man and Sinn Fein lord mayor of Cork, who died on hunger strike in Brixton prison, Lon-

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don, in 1920. McSwiney had said in his inaugural speech as mayor: "It is not those who can inflict the most but those that can suffer the most who will conquer." (A claim which those tortured or murdered by the IRA—and the families of those so treated—might have found a shade self-serving.)

THE USES OF PRISON protest and hunger strike are thus old weapons in the IRA arsenal, and it would be naive to see the most recent campaign as springing simply from the desire of prisoners (mostly nationalists, that is, Catholics, but backed by some loyalists, that is, Protestants) to be treated as political prisoners or prisoners-of-war. In this, however, they undoubtedly were encouraged by the British government's introduction of internment to cope with the violence that overwhelmed the north in 1970-71, as loyalists and nationalists made their own use of the civil rights movement and of the reforms and furies that were part of the reaction to it. Internment seemed to fall wholly on Catholics. It was followed by various forms of almost martial law—a Detention of Terrorists Order, by which court cases of detainees were heard by commissioners not bound by the usual rules of evidence—and in 1972 by the introduction of special category status for convicted terrorists. This, soon recognized by the government as a great mistake, was ended in 1976, though prisoners convicted before that date retained special status. IRA prisoners also argued that the emergency procedures under which they were sentenced—including, after 1973, the Diplock courts, in which a judge sat without a jury—gave them the right to special privileges in prison. Ultimately, they seemed to say, as insurgents in a "war" against Britain, fighting "to get Britain out," as agents of Irish nationalism with all the old sufferings of Ireland as motive-power and *raison d'être*, they were not like other men and women who have been convicted for murder, mayhem, unlawful shootings, causing explosions, or carrying arms and bombs.

Mr. Coogan's reporting technique often leads him to adopt the language of those he is discussing—talking, for example, of the IRA's "economic war" against Britain, or the "opposing armies." The effect, whatever Mr. Coogan really thinks, is to present the IRA as equal combatants in a just war, and the effect is intensified by his failure to give as much attention to the events for which these people have been imprisoned as he gives to their life in the Maze cells. "Kevin Delaney died when a bomb he was transporting blew up on a train in Portadown," writes Mr. Coogan; put this in the context of the Catholic church's refusal, exceptionally, to give Delaney a church burial and requiem mass. An honest attachment to Irish nationalism may lead to a certain mushiness of judgment, without great sin, but it is partial and slipshod reporting to say "to this day no member of the security forces has ever been imprisoned for either torture, causing loss of life, or any of the abuses of the conveyor-belt system, which form the daily coinage of 'law and order', North of Ireland style." References in Hansard, the parliamentary record, are made to 112 members of the armed forces in Northern Ireland being convicted for assault in the four years up to March 1976; 32 of the same were sent to prison for criminal offenses in Northern Ireland from 1970 to the end of 1975. In early 1977 a group of soldiers of the Black Watch regiment were imprisoned for planting false evidence on suspects in Northern Ireland. There was another case last year (admittedly after Mr. Coogan's completion date) when two members of the army were imprisoned for life for a killing in Ulster eight years before, for which evidence had only just come to light.

YET IT IS possibly Mr. Coogan's method that gives the impression of one-sidedness, when in fact he is mostly in a rush and ambivalent. He talks to and, somewhat less emphatically, presents the views of, a spokesman for the government, the prison governors, and the warders. (Eighteen prison officers had been killed up until June of last year, some of the 2,100 Northern Irelanders who should be remembered when the hunger strikers' funerals claim the front-pages.) The so-called Diplock courts had been established largely because it was impossible to get witnesses to testify and juries to give verdicts without fear of intimidation by terrorists—and Mr. Coogan admits the justification. He notes that as his book was going to press "the Provisional IRA claimed responsibility for kneecapping a 45-year old father of a family, Mr. Patrick Gallagher, in Donegal, because he had given evidence against IRA men charged with armed robbery before the South's Special Criminal Court." The south, it appears, feels the need of special courts too.

There are several threads that should be disentangled, and certain facts borne prominently in mind, when trying to cope with the complex problems out of which "H-Block" arises. One, which Mr. Coogan doesn't give enough weight to, is that roughly a million people in the north, two-thirds of the population, proudly consider themselves to be British citizens; they do not want to be forced to join the south. Many of them are grateful for the presence, behind the now more evident Royal Ulster Constabulary, of British troops. Many of these Ulster Protestants have ancestors who came from Scotland to Ireland before the Mayflower's passengers came down the gangplank in New England. Now, however much the people in the rest of the British Isles would like to give them the shove (and many would), these Northern Irelanders have so far elected to remain part of the United Kingdom, rather than join Eire in a united Ireland. In this respect the IRA is fighting the wrong enemy when it claims to be fighting to get the British out of Ireland. The real and more difficult task is to get the Northern Irish into Ireland, and the IRA campaign (as the

Isak Dinesen's Letters from Africa

Edited by **Frans Lasson** for the Rungstedlund Foundation.
Translated by **Anne Born**

Out of Africa, Isak Dinesen's lyrical memoir, was written ten years after her return from Kenya to Denmark. These *Letters*, written in the immediacy of experience, are the raw material which she was to transmute into great literature. They sound not only the lyrical note but the somber undertones and reveal as never before the young, vulnerable Karen Blixen. Illustrated $25.00

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gunmen probably know in their cold hearts) is designed to do anything but that.

AT THIS POINT the British are useful scapegoats. They have the burden not only of having made past mistakes but also of trying to administer justice in Northern Ireland, of attempting to see fair government done where all power-sharing proposals have so far failed, and of effecting change for the better in a country where powerful interests are involved in preserving the status quo of two sides, opposed to one another, faithful to the loyalties of 1690 and 1916. "No surrender" is not just the cry of Paisley's Protestants. The ground from which much IRA support arises is not to be denied: old wrongs, more recent political and social injustices, and present dreadful unemployment. But the thinking is soft, sentimental, and counterproductive that regards these murderous men and callous, misguided youths as in any way freedom fighters or legitimate revolutionaries. All crime can be called "political." The bashing of an old lady in a shop can be presented as an act against society. But the bomb which removes the limbs of a woman in a café and the bullet which shatters the stomach of a grocery delivery man are instruments of people who have put themselves at the furthest remove from the *polis* in which we hope to live with one another, while gradually improving the lives of us all.

A more incisive reading of the situation that has produced the H-Block protest is *Ten Years On In Northern Ireland: The Legal Control of Political Violence*, by Kevin Boyle, Tom Hadden, and Paddy Hillyard, who are respectively (and neutrally) at University College, Galway; Queen's University, Belfast; and the University of Bristol. This short book (The Cobben Trust, London) examines the socio-economic factors of the Northern Ireland conflict; the organization and activities of the main paramilitary groups on each side; police and army methods of searching, arresting, and questioning; the procedures of courts and prisons; and conclusions about state policy and law reform. It is a calm look at the difficulties facing justice in a time of turmoil and terrorism. The authors consider the basic problem that arises when the seemingly necessary stepped-up powers to arrest for questioning call forth even more distrust and hatred in the community, and more covert support for the gunmen. The book's conclusion is that the state is better off without such powers. Moreover, the present Northern Ireland policy (within, it should be said, a prison regime that is generally more liberal than that elsewhere in Britain) has not proved effective in shaking the beliefs of both republican and loyalist prisoners that they are not common criminals. Boyle, Hadden, and Hillyard write:

> It does not follow that members of those organisations are entitled to any special treatment while in custody. But there are strong pragmatic grounds for seeking to avoid the kind of adverse publicity and propaganda which has resulted from the attempt to force those who see themselves to be different from ordinary criminals to accept the status of ordinary criminals.

Strict prison discipline, uniform, and work have not proved beneficial. The authors believe—as does Mr. Coogan—that those prisoners who want to wear their own clothes and not work should be allowed these privileges, and that this policy would not encourage more terrorist activity.

Whether the IRA—which obviously sees great value in death, even if it is perforce the deaths of their own men—would agree to a limited concession of this sort is another matter. The authorities have concluded, after the New Year concessions, that the IRA is not sincerely interested in any relaxation that affects all prisoners; they want to be recognized in every way as special cases. Obviously if people were not distracted by prison protests and hunger strikes, more attention might be paid to the underlying issues that allow the Irish problem to remain a vicious circle of cause and effect, of rancor and death. Neither the fanatic behavior of terrorists nor the pious declarations of churchmen are any match for quiet negotiations among Britain, Ireland, and Ulster for inter-relationships and integration on various levels of government (the Benelux arrangement is a possible model), and for changes in education and religious practice (notably the sectarian segregation of schools and the difficulties put in the way of mixed marriages), the object being to encourage the growth of feeling among people, particularly the young, that they belong to neither one side nor the other.

Anthony Bailey

Anthony Bailey is the author of *Acts of Union: Reports on Ireland, 1973-79* (Random House) and other books.

Coming of Age in Chicago

The Neighborhood of Baseball: A Personal History of the Chicago Cubs by Barry Gifford

(Dutton; $12.50)

Are there any American men indifferent to baseball? Devoted as I am to the blandishments of high culture, the frantic voice of a sportscaster on someone's transistor radio exclaiming over a home run or the glimpse of a fierce contest in Central Park—the yelling players, the arc of a well-hit ball—can still induce nostalgia. The street vendor's hot dog is my *madeleine*.

Not long ago I stopped off in my neighborhood tavern for a beer, and glanced up at the television set above the bar just in time to see a player in right field race back toward the warning track and gather in a fast-dropping fly ball. I no longer know the players, no longer even know the teams—when I quit following baseball there were only eight in each league—but the grace of this anonymous play, the commentator's exultation, the crowd rising up in the background to cheer, prompted me to vow that I would hurry off to the ball park when the Cubs or the White Sox came to New York; these were the teams of my youth, and whatever residual loyalties I had were to them. The next morning I scanned the box scores with an eager eye—only to have my enthusiasm extinguished at a glance. The White Sox were in sixth place in the American League's Eastern Division (whatever that is) and the Cubs were in the cellar—just where they were when I gave up consulting the

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statistics 15 years ago and turned my attention to what I then fancied were more serious pursuits. The strike, to my great relief, has now obviated the need to even consider attending a game, and the sale of the Cubs to the *Chicago Tribune* no doubt means they will become more of a corporate operation, with night games and the banishment of the ebullient Jack Brickhouse ("Hey! Hey! A White Owl wallop!") in favor of some more unctuous, less effective commentator. Thus an era passes.

BARRY GIFFORD confides that he hasn't been to many ball games himself lately, but he sure knows a lot about the Cubs. There are more statistics in *The Neighborhood of Baseball* than any but the most dogged fan could absorb; every other chapter consists of a stupefying compendium of the Cubs's seasonal fortunes from the 1940s on, replete with batting averages and ERAs and RBIs. Ignore these chapters; not even a 12-year-old with a shoebox full of baseball cards could sustain interest in page after page of sentences like this one: "Newcomer Ellis Burton, who replaced George Altman in centerfield, hit .230; Lou Brock, who showed flashes of brilliance both at bat and in the field while copping 24 bases, wound up with a .258 average; and catcher Dick Bartell's bat mark dipped 69 points to .233."

I was never a baseball fan like Barry Gifford; his adulation of the White Sox's Minnie Minoso reminded me that not long ago I had thrown away Minoso's autograph, scrawled on the back of an orthodontist's appointment slip in 1961 and carried around in my wallet until the signature was scarcely visible. And my clearest memory of the Cubs is of reading the attendance figures in the fall, when they were no longer in contention, and dwelling with adolescent melancholy upon the sorry numbers—which once dwindled, I recall, to 138. (Gifford would know.) But *The Neighborhood of Baseball*, despite the author's obsession with recondite sports lore, is only intermittently about the Cubs. On the pretext of writing about a lousy baseball team that hasn't won the pennant since 1945, a team whose fans last year unfurled a banner on opening day that read WAIT TILL NEXT YEAR, Gifford has written his autobiography; and a fine autobiography it is.

Gifford's is the story of a boy growing up in the Chicago Jewish middle class during the late 1940s and 1950s, and it evokes that world with a sure hand: the grandfather who ran numbers from a candy stand beneath the elevated tracks near Wrigley Field and never wore an overcoat; the great-uncles in the fur business ("Ike, Nate, and Louie") and their customers, "gangsters with their girl friends, heavy-overcoated guys with thick cigars wedged between leather-gloved fingers"; the rituals and uniforms of summer camp; the urban landscape of taverns and luncheonettes; and the strange characters who hung around the neighborhood, like Crazy Chuck Syracuse, a high school dropout who drove a cab and left the meter running by accident one afternoon while he played a few innings of scrub. Unable to pay the $35 he ran up, he torched his cab and laid the blame on thieves, but was found out by the insurance company and sent to prison. Years later, asked if he had any regrets, Chuck reminded his questioner that he had gone "four for five in the game that day."

But *The Neighborhood of Baseball* is also about how hard it is to leave one's childhood behind. Without going into what he did after he left Chicago for college and another life, Gifford intimates that he was far from the provincial world of his youth; there are references to time spent in London, in Paris, in San Francisco, somewhere in the country (where the sound of rain on the roof reminded him of the time he had left his mitt out overnight and it had been ruined in a storm): the circuit of the generation that came of age in the 1960s and resisted settling down. Baseball is a literary trope, a convenient motif. Still sports-obsessed in his 20s, Gifford plays in a softball league out in Oakland; in Paris, he follows the Cubs's fortunes in the *International Herald Tribune*; in a bar in New York he recognizes Willie Miranda, once a great shortstop and now unemployed, having been fired as a checker of keys at the Playboy Club. A paunchy figure in a trench coat gulping down vodka, "his stiff black pompadour streaked with gray," Miranda reminisces about a no-hit game in which he drove in the only run, and is amazed when Gifford supplies the date.

There's something about boys from Chicago; it's not that they don't grow up, but that they don't become sophisticated, formal, embarrassed about their origins. They do things like stop off in Kansas City "for ribs" on their way West or have their authors' photo-

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graphs taken while wearing a Cubs T-shirt. They're proud to be from Chicago—even if they don't stay there. The most poignant scenes in *The Neighborhood of Baseball* occur when Gifford returns to Wrigley Field for the first time in 15 years, and finds nothing changed: there are the same vine-covered walls, the same announcer—and the Cubs lose. Visiting the old neighborhood—that archetypal *rite de passage*—Gifford finds the couple next door look the same, if somewhat smaller; driving past Friedman's Delicatessen, now boarded up, he remembers that it was always full of bookies, "guys named Louie who wore little checkered hats with a feather in the band." When he leaves Chicago, it is with vivid memories but without regret.

I admit that *The Neighborhood of Baseball* may well have moved me because it evoked my own past. After all, in how many books can I turn to the index and find listed there Bebop's Pool Hall on North Paulina, where I wasted so many afternoons in high school; or Barney Kaminski, a rival of Gifford's at Tecumseh Lodge summer camp, whom I knew in a later incarnation, when he was a waiter at Mama Leone's in Boston; or the local deejays Daddio Daylie and Big Bill Hill, who played records "while taking refreshment from his shopping bag, the clink of glass clearly audible in the background." I'm quite prepared to concede that such picturesque details may not resonate with the same intensity for readers who never listened to "Daddio's Jazz Patio" or hung out at Bebop's. But I suspect that anyone who has ever oiled a new glove and tied it up with a hardball in the pocket every night to break it in; spent eternities hurling a tennis ball against a garage wall while narrating entire doubleheaders to oneself; or debated the complex rules and boundaries governing a stickball game—what was fair, what was a strike, what was a home run—will be charmed by Gifford's book. I wish he had written more about his childhood and less about the vicissitudes of Hank Sauer's batting average, but asking a baseball fan to dispense with statistics is like asking Proust to get to the point.

James Atlas

James Atlas is the author of *Delmore Schwartz: The Life of an American Poet* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) and a contributing editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. He has a lifetime batting average of .137.

His Master's Voice

At the Barricades: Forty Years on the Cutting Edge of History by Wilfred Burchett with an introduction by Harrison E. Salisbury

(Times Books; $15)

The case of Wilfred Burchett, veteran propagandist and promoter of left-wing dictatorships, is becoming one of mistaken identity. He reminds Harrison Salisbury "of the old fashioned pre-1917 radicals . . . a Lincoln Steffens or a John Reed with an Australian accent." Salisbury sees him moving "where his humanist sympathies led him . . . lending his sympathy to one cause after another not because of some Marxist doctrine but because he believes in the underdog, whatever the continent, whatever the color, whatever the creed." According to an equally sympathetic reviewer in the *New York Times Book Review*, he is a man of "uncommon honesty" who "responded with an almost childlike directness whenever he saw something that smacked of injustice." Less surprisingly, Noam Chomsky, David Dellinger, Corliss Lamont, and William Kunstler, among others, rallied to his defense and formed the Wilfred Burchett Support Committee when he was attacked by the *New York Post* in 1977; their committee designated him "one of the most respected foreign journalists."

Burchett has spent much of his adult life dispensing political propaganda as "a maverick journalist" (in his own words) or "iconoclast of contemporary radicalism" (in Harrison Salisbury's words) on behalf of virtually every existing Communist police state, including the Soviet Union, China, North Korea, North Vietnam, Cuba, Angola, and others. To be sure, there were times when he found it difficult to reconcile his pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese attitudes (he eventually came down on the Soviet-Vietnamese side), and there were even moments of doubt about certain Chinese or Soviet policies, according to this autobiography at any rate. Nonetheless Burchett's basic attitudes remained consistent and sharply focused: he gave the benefit of every doubt to the various Communist regimes and movements; as a journalist (and occasionally informal go-between or messenger), he promoted their political objectives on the one hand, and depicted Western countries and policies in the worst possible light on the other. He had uncommonly easy access to Communist authorities in several countries and considerable freedom of movement in Vietnam and Korea during the war, when he reported from the North Korean and North Vietnamese (or Vietcong) side. Whether he was some sort of KGB agent—as has been suggested by the *New York Post* and various Australian sources—we shall not know until the Soviet Freedom of Information Act allows Western reporters to scrutinize the appropriate files. In any event the record speaks for itself, and Burchett's career and work, including this book, can be evaluated without pursuing the possibility of such affiliation.

Burchett's political sympathies were by no means unusual. Like many other Western intellectuals (and quasi-intellectuals) in this century, he was attracted to societies that had in common, whatever their differences and subsequent enmities toward one another, the claim of being socialist and revolutionary. More unusually, he is from Australia, a country not known for its vocal multitudes of alienated citizens. Moreover, unlike most estranged intellectuals, Burchett's origins were relatively humble; born in 1911, he had little formal education and held a variety of laboring jobs in Australia before he became a journalist. Thus his career is a story of remarkable social and geographic mobility. He acquired an influential position in global journalism, contact with generally inaccessible political regimes and leaders (including Ho Chi Minh, Chou En-lai, and Castro), and a

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mixed, though increasingly favorable, reputation in many circles. He also has been prodigiously active and productive: he is the author of 29 books prior to this one, an unusual accomplishment for a journalist even if many of these books represent in part recycled articles and reports.

IT IS NOT CLEAR when Burchett's world view crystallized and how his general concern with social injustices merged with support for countries such as Stalin's Soviet Union. There was apparently some political radicalism in his family; his father, a Methodist lay-preacher and not too prosperous farmer-builder, became increasingly hostile to a society straitened by the Depression. As Burchett recalled, "The continuous family misfortunes had shaken his [father's] earlier beliefs and caused him to ponder the ills and injustices of the day." Burchett also refers to a local discussion group, visited occasionally by Melbourne intellectuals including "a known communist" and "a university professor lately returned from the Soviet Union," which left its mark on young Burchett. He was a youth of uncommon energy and ambition who taught himself several languages including Russian. When he first went to London he "got a job with the London office of Intourist, the Soviet travel agency . . . because of [his] rudimentary knowledge of Russian." We learn no more about his job and his first apparent contact with Soviet officialdom. The job did not last because few people traveled between Britain and the Soviet Union in the mid-1930s. Burchett entered journalism by reporting on World War II in Southeast Asia.

Burchett's political sympathies surfaced for the first time when he was reporting from post-World War II Germany for the *Daily Express*. (Most of his journalistic customers over the years were non-communist newspapers, which were impressed by his non-Western contacts, journalistic scoops, and the aura of being on the spot which they invariably equated with authenticity.) As early as 1945-46 Burchett embraced what became known as the revisionist interpretation of the cold war. Thus, for instance, "the Russians fought for a united Germany and the West opposed it." The West wanted to punish Germany and deprive her of industry; the USSR merely wished for reasonable reparations. The Soviet plunder of East Germany eluded Burchett but we have a colorful account of a British official taking "crateloads of valuable German furniture and carpets" to England. The Berlin blockade came about when the Soviet Union imposed "custom controls on all non-military traffic" which the Western powers "interpreted as 'a blockade of Berlin'." By this time Burchett had a partisan and selective scenario according to which he interpreted world events. Like others sympathetic toward the Soviet Union, he asked: "What did the Russians want? Above all security." He failed to note that such Soviet concerns were rather overblown and that only superiority over the West and the maximization of control (domestic or foreign) could allay the insecurities of the Soviet leadership. He was apparently capable of believing that the Soviet occupiers "sought a united . . . Germany under a social and political system chosen by the German people themselves." One wonders if Burchett knew at the time, or has learned since, of any country under Soviet control where the people were allowed to live under a system of their own choice.

EVEN MORE remarkable from the vantage point of the present are Burchett's views of the show trial of Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary on which he reported in 1949. Thus he avers that "The facts of the Mindszenty case were buried under distortions and emotional denunciations from the first day. . . . The essence of it all was set forth in Cardinal Mindszenty's opening statement." This was the statement thoughtfully drafted by the Hungarian secret police in which Mindszenty obligingly linked his social origins to his conspiratorial activities against the regime. Burchett was either totally innocent of any knowledge of the Soviet purge trials of the 1930s or unable to detect any connections between their methodology and what transpired in Cardinal Mindszenty's trial and others in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless Burchett still goes to great lengths to defend the authenticity of the proceedings, noting that Mindszenty and his secretary looked fine in court and insisting that they were not drugged, as if there could have been no other explanation of their behavior.

This hardnosed iconoclastic radical was also capable of swallowing the official fairy tales about the guilt of Laszlo Rajk, a high-ranking Hungarian Communist leader, and his fellow "conspirators" who fell victim to the anti-Tito campaign that swept Eastern Europe in the late 1940s: "I had no doubt of their guilt or of the inevitability of a death sentence for Laszlo Rajk given the gravity of the activities to which he had confessed." Subsequently the Kostov trial in Bulgaria—in the course of which the accused retracted his confessions in court—planted some doubts in Burchett which "plagued" him long after Rajk and Kostov were posthumously rehabilitated. Such doubts apparently did not lead to a questioning of the system that produced them. Instead Burchett has embraced, with perceptible relief, the startling theory that these trials resulted from the cooperation between Beria and the CIA under Allen Dulles. According to this theory, the Slansky trial in Czechoslovakia was part of this clever scheme to wipe out "loyal communists . . . well equipped to build and maintain a bridge with the West. It was precisely for this that Dulles and Stalin decreed between them—without Stalin ever knowing that he was a dupe of Dulles—that they had to be liquidated."

Besides the late Cardinal Mindszenty, Burchett also has strong feelings about the (former) Hungarian ruling classes, or what he takes to be members of such classes. He reports that upon the news of the outbreak of the Korean War they swarmed all over the sidewalk cafés of Budapest, wearing "polished black legging boots" and "cockades in their tweed hats," "many with maps spread out on the café tables." As a resident of Budapest at the time, I can testify that if there was any rejoicing among Hungarian reactionaries over the outbreak of the Korean War it was expressed rather discreetly: by 1950 people no longer discussed politics in public places and if they had any maps to spread in order to study the military dispositions in Korea they were unlikely to do so in sidewalk cafés! (Yet one cannot discount the possibility that the author was privileged to spot an exceptionally exhibitionistic and

"THEN there was the judge who said he had no objection to kiddie porn as long as it was in good taste."

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self-destructive group of Hungarian fascists.) Burchett's bizarre perceptions of matters Hungarian are further reflected in the observation that the 1956 revolution "had no support from the peasantry, traditionally a strong revolutionary force in Hungary but by then the most satisfied sector of the population." Of the three assertions entailed in this quotation the last is the most obviously incorrect. Whether or not Hungarian peasants were traditionally a revolutionary force is at best questionable; to allege that the peasants did not support the revolution should be translated into saying that they did not initiate it or play a leading part in it.

A HIGHLIGHT of Burchett's journalistic career was his coverage of the Korean War, mostly from North Korea. He reported, among other things, that "brutal pressures [were] applied to force Chinese and North Korean POWs to renounce their rights to repatriation." In fact these prisoners, like millions of other citizens of "socialist" countries before and after them, seized the opportunity "to vote with their feet." This, from Burchett's and his North Korean and Chinese patrons' point of view, was an intolerable state of affairs, especially since Burchett compared their camps in one of his reports (not included in this book) to "a holiday resort in Switzerland. The atmosphere is also nearer that of a luxury holiday resort than a POW camp." Of the Americans in North Korean captivity, Burchett observed that "They are not frightened of Koreans or Chinese. They are frightened of their own government and what is in store for them after their release." Was this an oblique way of betraying awareness of what happened to former Soviet POWs returned to their country after World War II from Germany? One wonders.

In his autobiography Burchett refrains from mentioning his colorful reports of the bacteria warfare hoax, although, according to another Australian journalist, Denis Warner, Burchett "was one of the first correspondents to report that the United States was using germ warfare in Korea. In his report . . . Burchett wrote indignantly about the hideous epidemic the Americans had brought to North Korea." Nor is there any reference to Burchett's alleged activities on behalf of the North Korean-Chinese military authorities whom he helped, according to many accounts, to interrogate American and Australian prisoners, activities which led to the loss of his Australian passport.

After Korea, Burchett took up the cause of the Vietnamese Communists and put himself at the service of the North Vietnamese government chronicling the heroism of the Vietcong and acting as guide to visiting Western journalists, including Harrison Salisbury, whose introduction neglects to mention such personal contacts with the author. According to Warner, Burchett helped both the Chinese and Vietnamese authorities screen the visa applications of foreign journalists to assure that those with improper political attitudes would gain no admission. Following Vietnam, Burchett reported on the Angolan war (from the pro-Soviet-Cuban side) and also on the atrocities of the Pol Pot regime from Cambodia after the Vietnamese troops occupied that country.

We learn relatively little from this book about the author's personal life except from the early chapters. After he leaves Australia and becomes a journalist his public roles and interests overshadow his private affairs. There are fleeting references to his two marriages, the first to a German-Jewish woman which did not last and the second to a Bulgarian functionary (of the press department of the ministry of foreign affairs and later an accredited foreign correspondent of the weekly journal of the Bulgarian Writers' Union) which did. He occasionally mentions his three children born in various Communist countries but it seems that his travels did not allow for active parental involvement. He says little about his eight years in the Soviet Union, apparently the longest period of time spent in any single country after his departure from Australia.

This autobiography presents a guarded self-portrait of a manically active, politically driven, and generally unreflective man, a skillful operator with easy manners and some sense of humor. None of these attributes is especially remarkable or helps to explain adequately his credibility in the Western media and among certain Western intellectuals. Besides the appeal of his ad-

STILL LIFE

I considered her chest, debating cones,
half-spheres, and whether one had,
as she claimed, to know the skeleton
in order to draw a body, clothed,
enigmatic as rock's thrusts and faults

or the square root of two. As removed
as my mother laid out in the stiffness
of a nap, the bedspread's imprint on her cheek
when she slipped back into our vernacular.
As prey to imagination as the bodies

of the dead. Out the window, gravestones
tilted in the light's slow-winged retreat
across the afternoon, coffins floating
with the earth's crust over its molten core,
slate markers sucked by moon, land

rising waterlike in its own tides
—grand movements as imperceptible
as the clock's hour hand, the hours
that would deliver me from that classroom
to this: thirty-one, hair beginning to gray,

I want, when an ordinary woman
in the subway cavern suddenly sings,
her voice spending its echoing fullness
indiscriminately, to render
the spiralling cones of its transience.

Debora Greger

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ventures, his access to generally forbidding or secretive authorities and leaders, and the insider's glamour, Burchett's image and influence rest on a fundamental misreading of his views and attitudes. Thus in the eyes of the *New York Times* reviewer he "has always been firmly out of step"; according to Salisbury he "is a man who defies classification." It is this view of him as "maverick," "iconoclast," and non-conformist, whose heart is basically in the right place, that provides the key to these otherwise bewildering assessments. A closer look at Burchett's selective moral passions and concerns reveals that, far from being difficult to classify, he falls into a clearly patterned category of Western intellectuals whose rejection of their society has become institutionalized and entirely predictable.

Unfortunately, and contrary to Mr. Salisbury, Burchett's "humanist sympathies" were somewhat less than ecumenical and rarely if ever "led him" toward the victims of the governments and political system he admired. Any reader trying to find sympathetic references to the victims of Stalin (or Khrushchev or Brezhnev) in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe, to the Indochinese boat people, the Afghan rebels, Cuban political prisoners and exiles, and many other groups will waste his time. Wilfred Burchett's choice of underdogs is selective and rooted in ideological criteria.

The most charitable interpretation one may offer of Burchett's attitudes and activities is that while more adventurous and more widely traveled than most, he shares the attitudes of many Western intellectuals whose rejection of their own society leads them to embrace, for varying lengths of time, a succession of extremely oppressive political systems.

Paul Hollander

Paul Hollander, who teaches sociology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, is the author of *Soviet and American Society: A Comparison* (Oxford University Press). His *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba* will be published this fall by Oxford University Press.

Mixed Memories

Everything We Had: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Thirty-three American Soldiers Who Fought It by Al Santoli

(Random House; $12.95)

What were you doing in 1969? Jonathan Polansky was falling in love with a Vietnamese woman and with Lang Co, a "beautiful, beautiful place, on the coast of the Gulf of Tonkin." Nights, Mr. Polansky guarded the village. Days, he taught in the village school and made love to his woman by a waterfall. He was happier than he had ever been back home. Then his unit was transferred to the Ashau valley, leaving Lang Co unguarded. Three months later he returned:

> The village was flattened. There was not a soul in sight. It was flattened by VC destruction. The village was completely burned because all the people were American sympathizers. . . . Every living thing was gone. I walked into the schoolhouse. I started crying and crying. It couldn't come together for me. . . . It just couldn't come together for me.

Mr. Polansky is one of 33 American veterans whose memories of the war Al Santoli, a fellow veteran, has collected in this artful, moving, and important book. Organized along chronological and thematic lines, *Everything We Had* is also a study of character; in talking about the war, these 31 men and two women reveal much about themselves. Mr. Santoli has wisely included their pictures and brief biographies that tell us what they are doing now, and it's immensely satisfying to turn to these and find out that so-and-so has a wife and three children and lives in Lowell, Massachusetts, and has not, thank you, been destroyed by the war. The book begins in the days of the Kennedy counter-insurgency program and ends in the memory of Stephen Klinkhammer, a Navy hospital corpsman who served aboard the carrier *Midway* during the helicopter-borne evacuation of Saigon in April 1975. He saw a planeload of evacuees blown up by a North Vietnamese rocket, the gold bars being taken from Marshall Key's Cessna, the whole panic. And he speaks for all these veterans when he says: "People want me to bury it. I can't bury it. I did learn something and I'm not sure what. But I know it's affected me a whole lot." That's about the way the war stays with most Americans: we know we learned something and are not sure what, only it sure affected us a lot.

Everything We Had is stirring as a document of what Mr. Santoli calls "the human ordeal" of Vietnam. But it also tells us things we didn't know about the war and so makes us question some of our beliefs about it. Take a phrase like "search-and-destroy mission." To most of us, these words bring burning villages and wailing peasants to mind. But they should also summon images of dead American soldiers since, according to several of these authoritative witnesses, the search-and-destroy strategy was devised to draw American blood. One soldier explains: "You send a patrol out in order to get it ambushed, in order to mark a target with a smoke rocket from a helicopter so jets can come in and napalm the area." A CIA man adds: "Expose yourself and draw fire. That was the strategy and that's wrong. That's letting the enemy have the initiative. It's letting them strike when they want to strike, where they want to strike and how they want to strike. And that's guaranteed failure in a guerrilla war." It gave the enemy one decisive advantage: by raising or lowering our casualties, he could make his political case here at home. The enclave strategy recommended by General Gavin at the time might have saved lives, thereby depriving the enemy of the weapon with which he ultimately won. It was mounting casualties that changed our hearts and minds.

"Bombing pause" is another phrase that had one meaning here and quite another one in Vietnam. To many of us it meant extending the olive branch of peace to the Vietnamese. But to the soldiers it meant, as one of them says, "more American deaths," because of course the enemy would use the pause to send more supplies south. "Didn't our lives mean anything?" this man

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asks. It's a tough question, and one recalls with shame that their lives seemed to mean less to many people in the antiwar movement than the lives of enemy soldiers.

ANOTHER TOUGH question might be asked about the "Christmas bombing," which is yet one more of those phrases that become Janus-faced after reading this book. Did the bombing speed the end of our part in the war and so save American lives? The testimony of Admiral William Lawrence, then a prisoner in a Hanoi jail and now commandant of the Naval Academy, suggests that it did. "[T]he thing that really made us get our hopes up," he says,

> was when the B52s came in and bombed Hanoi. Christmas 1972. That's when we knew that the attitude among the North Vietnamese had really changed. We could see it in the guards, in the officials that we saw in the camp. That B52 bombing . . . they changed from cocky confidence to a desire to get the war over.

Critics have argued that the raids of December 1972 were aimed more at reassuring the South Vietnamese government than at spreading peace-bearing fear in the north. Yet if the attitude of Admiral Lawrence's guards is broadly representative, the bombing did change the mood in the north. What is certain is that soon thereafter the North Vietnamese did sign a treaty which allowed us to get out of Vietnam with an appearance of honor (and which the North Vietnamese broke as soon as they saw that they could do so without an American response). So, ghastly as it was, was the bombing necessary? Anthony Lewis, William Shawcross, and others have argued that it was not, and those arguments and the adverse moral judgment they entail on Nixon, Kissinger, and Haig still seem valid to me. But I must say that, with its focus on our soldiers, this book has made me ask that question with a new anguish of complexity.

It is with relief that one turns from such problematic matters to a wrathful contemplation of the infamous Phoenix program, on which this book brings detailed news in the recollections of Mike Beamon, who served with a band of Navy marauders, spreading terror in the Vietcong-controlled Mekong Delta. Mr. Beamon worked alongside men who had been in jail for rape, theft, and assault when the CIA bailed them out on the condition that they work in the Phoenix program. They were in effect mercenaries, and were given bounties for the number of weapons they brought in, and sometimes, says Mr. Beamon, for the number of ears. Such viciousness was calculated; its aim was to disrupt the social order of villages under the sway of the Vietcong. "We had Rand Corporation people with us," says Mr. Beamon; their purpose was to conduct "perturbation research," which is a phrase utterly without moral ambiguity that means, well, let Mr. Beamon describe it: "if you go into one village and disrupt the infrastructure of that village and assassinate the village chief and make it look like the Vietcong did it . . . ," then you may be sure you have caused perturbation. One way of causing extreme perturbation was to stab a man, then paint him green, to symbolize that he had been killed by the green-faced frogmen of the Navy, and then cut out his liver, and then take a bite out of it. "Not only had you died very violently and horribly," says Mr. Beamon, "but you wouldn't even be able to enter nirvana [the Buddhist heaven] intact, and that impact was just incredible. Finding a loved one with a green face and stabbed—in the middle of the road—was incredible terror."

ON THE OTHER HAND, the enemy could be just as cruel. Thomas Bird, a rifleman with the First Cavalry Division, remembers watching as 40 North Vietnamese soldiers advanced on his small unit, and his worst fears rapidly became fact when "they killed the wounded as they came out of the tree line." Taken prisoner, Mr. Bird saw his captors try to hack a comrade's finger off to get his wedding ring. The prisoners were kept near a latrine, and of course the North Vietnamese would urinate on them. "I spent the whole time praying," says Mr. Bird. Admiral Lawrence, for his part, relied on poetry to get him through his ordeal in the "Black Hole of Calcutta," a special cell in the Hanoi Hilton (Lawrence spent six years in prison) where the admiral was put for communicating with other prisoners. He remembers it as a

> dark cell, probably about six feet square. It had kind of a tin roof and during the day the sun would beam down on that. I figure the temperature went up to about 120 degrees in the daytime. And the problem that I had was a very bad heat rash. My body was completely covered with heat sores. . . .

"I've got to get some mental activity going here," the admirable admiral thought, in touching Pentagonese. So, after discovering that "O Tennessee, My Tennessee" forms "a perfect iambic pentameter line [sic]," he composed a complete poem in his mind that has since, one is happy to report, been made the state poem of guess where.

IT IS ONE of the basic clichés of hack journalism that ours is an age without heroes, yet Admiral Lawrence is clearly one. His story stirs the urge to emulate; then comes the rueful self-knowledge that you could never measure up to his standard. Nor to that of men of the Second Battalion, First Marines, who held a hill in the DMZ against the proverbial impossible odds. John Muir, a rifleman, remembers:

> Two divisions of North Vietnamese were coming across the border and we were sitting there watching them. There was a sort of valley that they were coming through and a hill right in the middle of the valley. We took the hill. We just stayed there and died. And stopped them.

The terse style is full of swagger; Mr. Santoli's tape recorder is not one of those bland instruments that makes everyone sound like a writer for the *New Yorker*.

Finally, mention should be made of Clare, a Californian, because he is dead. Clare was killed trying to free his buddies from an ambush. "It was a U-shaped ambush," a friend recalls.

> He had broken open a good portion of it and a lot of people were getting out of there. He refused to evacuate himself and got a couple of other guys out who couldn't make it. He was hit a number of times at that point and was firing one-handed.

Since nearly his whole unit was wiped out in the ambush, there are no witnesses to Clare's valor; uncommemorated by a Medal of Honor, it lives on as a legend in his friend's memory and now, thanks to this book, in ours.

Pericles would have understood. In his funeral oration he says that it is the high civic task of poetry to keep the memory of great deeds alive both as a source from which future generations may take inspiration and as a reward for the men who performed them. Facing the Gettysburg battlefield, Lincoln said that the memory of the sacrifice made on those hills would light our path for generations, and by his eloquence he ensured that what he prophesied would come true. This book is not a work of heroic style, like Lincoln's

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address. Still, it performs a similar role: it keeps alive the ambiguous memory of an ambiguous cause—of its shame no less than its heroism. And it does something more. It answers the contemptibly facile charge that those who served in Vietnam fought for nothing since their enterprise came to nothing in the end. The journey, not the arrival, matters, Montaigne counsels; and in this human record of the American journey to Vietnam and back there is much to remember with pride.

Jack Beatty

Brief Reviews

Solomon's Daughter by C. E. Poverman

(Viking; $12.95)

Most of *Solomon's Daughter* is dialogue, which is appropriate: the novel moves and feels like drama. The story advances more by talk than by narrative excursion or the artifice of plot, and the characters, revealed to us almost exclusively by what they have to say to each other, don't change much. What happens, happens slowly; what holds our attention—and holds it firmly—is the gradual process of discovering who these characters are and the sense that our understanding of their predicament is continually being enriched.

Solomon's daughter, Rose, has been mangled in an auto accident. Her husband, Price, skips out after seeing her in the hospital; their two children are young and uncomprehending. The accident forces the old family unit of Solomon, Bea, and children Nick and Rose suddenly and violently back together to confront the spectacle of Rose in a coma, Rose paralyzed, Rose perhaps never again to function as an adult. We watch them react to one another and behave as a family both before and after the accident in lengthy scenes from Rose's childhood and adolescence. Amidst new doubts and grief we see the worn threads of communication among all four strained to breaking: Solomon, aging surgeon and sacrificing father, now only going through paternal motions; Bea, earth-motherish and ever hopeful, now given to mysticism and aggravatingly unrealistic expectations; Nick, never really comfortable with any of them, now confused by selfishness and guilt; Rose, rebellious, even as a paralytic fighting her mother's affection. What is so well observed, and so moving, is the fact that even in the face of catastrophe and anguish these characters can react only as they always have. They seize on one another's familiar weaknesses; they fail to appreciate one another's emotional growth; they cannot summon enough compassion even in new, demanding circumstances to change old patterns of behavior, to overwhelm old resentment, old bitterness.

This novel has occasional patches of limp and simplistic conversation and monologue, and tension droops during some of the flashbacks. But on the whole it is a finely crafted piece of work, subtly controlled, emotionally taut, and unusual for its return to a rather classical vision. Halfway through, the realization comes—as it comes in the plays of Beckett and O'Neill, in the first paragraph of Flannery O'Connor stories, in much Greek tragedy—that in this work character is fate. *Solomon's Daughter* is an impressive and wrenching exploration of that premise.

Marc Granetz

Mourners Below by James Purdy

(Viking; $13.95)

It is not unusual in James Purdy's works for the dead to command the living. The absent nephew is the main presence in *The Nephew*; the vanished Summerlad family obsesses the memory and imagination of the storyteller in *Jeremy's Version*. For Purdy, life and death are mutually penetrable. The living, shorn of laughter and tears, may wander, ghostlike, through pallid existences, while the passion of—and for—the dead survives the grave.

In *Mourners Below*, Purdy's latest demonstration that "terrible events are the order of the universe," a dead brother dictates the destiny of his grieving family. The novel focuses on Duane Bledsoe, 17, whose two older half-brothers, Douglas and Justin, have been killed in war. Duane's parents are divorced, and in his father, Eugene, with whom he lives, Duane encounters only "deep wells of silence" and a refusal to mourn their common loss. Alone in his grief, Duane welcomes the company of his brothers' ghosts, particularly that of his beloved Justin.

The first third of *Mourners Below* is Purdy's account of the costs of repression—a skillful psychological portrait of a father whose profound emotional inhibitions cripple those around him. But this psychological realism explodes into something wilder and more comic—and finally more terrible—once Duane receives an invitation to a costume ball from the luscious Estelle Dumont.

Estelle is another of Purdy's irresistible, devouring women, kin to Elvira Summerlad in *Jeremy's Version* and Madame Girard in *Malcolm*. Once Justin's mistress, she will not be content until she recaptures Justin in Duane. The costume ball is wonderfully metaphorical; before it begins, each of the novel's characters, from the Bledsoes' housekeeper, Mrs. Newsom, to Duane's tutor, Duke La Roche, to Estelle herself, is comically intent on finding the pliable Duane just the right costume to cloak his identity.

The rites of passage for a Purdy adolescent are never easy. They entail the twinned savagery of sex and violence, neither executed without blood. Before Duane can come into his own, he must survive an all-night orgy with Estelle and a brutal rape by two ruffians who—like just about everyone else in the book—confuse him with Justin.

The narrative pace quickens and the improbability of events mounts as *Mourners Below* speeds to a conclusion. Plot revelations are few; revealed instead are the passionate depths to which these characters, at first so vacant and bloodless, can descend.

Mourners Below recapitulates many of Purdy's concerns—with small-town families in crisis, the explosiveness of contained emotion, the marriage between the dead and the living. Purdy sees to the heart of relations between the sexes, mourning the dreadful chasm between them. He celebrates the bonds between brothers, between father and son, even as he underlines the near impossibility of intimacy. Creating a world where the supernatural merges with the real, he illuminates a reality whose core, if not its contours, matches our own.

Julia M. Klein

Julia M. Klein is a Philadelphia writer.

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Correspondence, *from page 7*

and seek to transform those sources (the Brandt report on North-South relations) and to dialogue—not give political and military support to repression—with those placed in impossible conditions by our societies and particularly with whatever democratic tendencies exist within them. I am proud to be part of this difficult, problematic, necessary task.

The 'treaty trap'

To the editors:

I am the "good friend" of President Reagan to whom TRB (*TNR*, June 6) refers as the author of *The Treaty Trap*, published in 1969, which the president cited in his West Point address. He has frequently done so before. The book is the only history of the performance and breach of political treaties. Three patterns emerge: all nations have regularly broken their treaties. Nonetheless statesmen habitually have relied upon treaties. Because there is no sheriff among nations, the only effective remedy for breach is war.

Most of us wish that nuclear weapons had never been invented, but they were, and we cannot "ban" them by treaties or international law, both of which have been customarily violated. George F. Kennan, whom TRB quotes, used to know this. He wrote in *American Diplomacy 1900-1950*: "The most serious fault of our past policy formulation [lies] in . . . the belief that it should be possible to suppress the chaotic and dangerous aspirations of governments in the international field by the acceptance of some system of legal rules and restraints."

TRB suffers from the disease of treaty-reliance. He associates treaties with peace and their absence with war, despite the fact that war and treaties have kept company through the ages. The founding fathers knew better. Alexander Hamilton (*The Federalist* No. 15) relates "how little dependence is to be placed on treaties." James Madison (*The Federalist* No. 41) asks: "With what color of propriety could the force necessary for defense be limited by those who cannot limit the force of offense?"

Unlike TRB, the president has read the history of nonperformance and will not fall into the treaty trap. If TRB does not have time so to inform himself, he might read about the tragedy resulting from the first disarmament treaty recounted in the 34th chapter of Genesis.

Laurence W. Beilenson
Los Angeles, California

Corrections

Due to an error in the editing of Robert Weisbrot's "The Siege of the Argentine Jews" (*TNR*, June 27), the Peronist deputy Juan Carlos Cornejo Linares was incorrectly identified as a "leftist." In fact, Cornejo is a rightist, and his views are typical of those of ultra-nationalist, anti-Semitic, right-wing Argentine xenophobes.

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A typographical error reversed the meaning of a sentence in "Frank Liberalism," by Emily Yoffe (*TNR*, July 4 & 18). Rest assured that Congressman Barney Frank addresses and understands a range of people *without*—not with—either condescension or snobbery.

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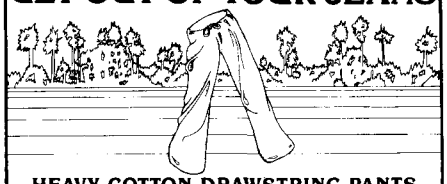

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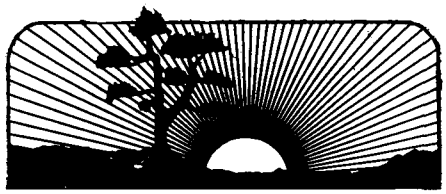

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Italy Diarist

I began this trip in a stifling compartment aboard the Palatino, one of those international trains that are invariably described as "crack." The train sped out of Paris, but slowed to a fitful crawl at the Ligurian coast, with the Mediterranean shimmering across the tracks. I arrived in Rome 12 hours after the train's scheduled morning arrival, as the "autonomous" unions—unaffiliated with the major Communist, Socialist, or Catholic labor federations—played out one of those go-slow "articulated" strikes that the Italians have pioneered. Still, the day I lost at the beginning I recovered at the end, when the airport controllers knocked off for 24 hours and enforced an extra stay.

The major story during my visit was the pathetic attempt to rescue six-year-old Alfredo Rampi, who had fallen down an abandoned well. For two days Italy was transfixed. Alessandro Pertini, the old president of the Republic—who has had to mourn publicly over many tragedies, from terrorist slayings to the catastrophic earthquakes last fall—came on the scene and remained to monitor the effort. Had the rescue succeeded, it would have given this disaggregated community a needed and valid moral boost. Italian friends saw the boy's plight and the struggle to pull him from the entrapping mud as having an almost allegorical quality. It summed up the bonds of family, the love of children, the brooding conflict with death, and the rhetorical processing of tragedy that strikes Americans as sentimental but is authentic—all of which remain motive forces in this society. But rescue efforts finally failed, and the last stages of the episode were sad and tawdry. The rescue area became a televised carnival scene, with dwarfs arriving to squeeze through the narrow shafts, a Sicilian "yogi," and even calls for a trained monkey. In America or Sweden or West Germany, distraught relatives and pontificating newspaper columns charged, the rescue certainly would have succeeded. The Socialists attacked the pervasive corruption of Italian institutions and demanded the resignations of those responsible. The rescue effort dissolved into a hangover of politicized recriminations.

At the same time, discussions for a new government were proceeding. It is still questionable whether the cabinet that Giovanni Spadolini—former historian, newspaper editor, and notable of the small Republican party—has now constructed can last much beyond the summer. For the first time since June 1945, the Christian Democrats have allowed a "lay" politician to form a ministry, though they still hold half the cabinet places. The Christian Democrats remain in cumulative disarray after the resignation of their ineffective prime minister, Arnaldo Forlani, who resigned in the wake of the P-2 Masonic scandal. The P-2 scandal remains more obscure but potentially more pervasive than its many predecessors. P-2 refers to a Masonic lodge, a network of influence and protection that helped incubate many earlier abuses, including possible cover-ups of neo-fascist terrorism, vast rake-offs on improper sales of under-taxed state oil reserves, and even shadowy efforts to win influence over Italy's leading newspaper, the Milan *Corriere della Sera*.

In the recent municipal elections the Communists put up posters claiming they were "the only party not on the lists of P-2," but the Socialists benefited the most at the polls. For the Catholics, however, a government headed by a notable without a mass party behind him was preferable to a Socialist-led ministry. Recalling the factional alignments of late 1945, the influence of Spadolini's party rests on a fragment of non-Communist Resistance-descended academics and professionals, high on honesty and low on votes. In contrast, the Socialist leader, Bettino Craxi, occupies the center of the spectrum and has the potential to institute a major alternative to Christian Democratic patronage and power. Craxi's principles remain obscure, but the fecklessness of the Christian Democratic regime impels a search for plausible alternatives. The recent rejection of the Christian Democratic- and church-sponsored referendum to roll back abortion legislation suggests that the Catholic party cannot bank forever on what has been its implicit appeal: "Hold on to nurse for fear of something worse."

One reason that appeal is of declining effectiveness in Italy is that it didn't work in France. Socialism in Paris makes alternatives more conceivable in Rome. Ironically, it is the French Communists —sectarian, anti-intellectual, conformist, and now significantly reduced in support—who have ended up with cabinet positions, while the far more tolerant and independent Italian party may be frozen out by center-left coalitions. This is logical enough: Mitterrand's inclusion of the French Communists was virtually costless, whereas Craxi calculates that he can be overwhelmed in either a united left or a Historic Compromise. And Mitterrand, unlike Craxi, has a substantive vision of the left.

One senses that this is potentially a remarkable passage for politics throughout much of Europe (as well as the United States). Besides the transformations in France and in Poland, Helmut Schmidt's coalition is under severe stress in Germany and contradictory American statements on European missile negotiations tend to undermine his position, while in Britain both major parties are internally riven. Now, if Washington accepts arms negotiations on a schedule less languorous than that envisaged by Eugene Rostow; if the rates of Western inflation and American interest come down and stay down; and if the trough of the British depression has indeed been reached (while the Social Democrats fizzle at by-elections and Labour blocks Benn), then maybe the old political formulas can recover a new lease on life. But these are huge ifs. In the meantime the only safe generalization to be made about a group of countries gravitating to the left if they earlier voted right, and to the right if they earlier voted left, is that allegiances are up for grabs.

For the first time since the oil crisis of 1973, moreover, questions of civic participation, the quality of political representation, and the openness of society seem as preoccupying as the stakes of political economy. Despite the recession, one perceives a reawakening of the aspirations of the late 1960s: the search for political choice and an end to being told that all alternatives are blocked. This heady desire to make history anew does not necessarily mean a swing to the left. It does mean a challenge to whoever clings to power by claiming a change is dangerous. Perhaps the changes will be dangerous. Certainly they will be exciting.

Charles S. Maier

Charles S. Maier teaches modern European history at Harvard University.

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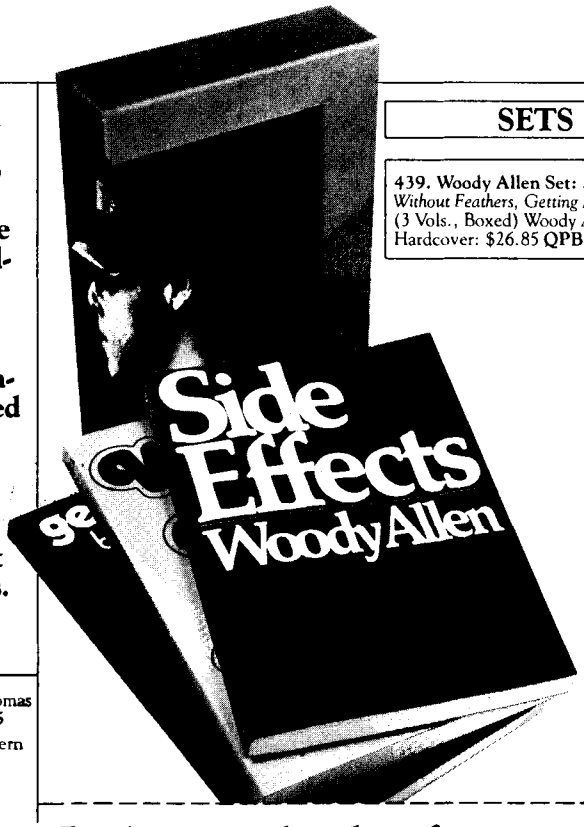

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